University of Alberta

Identity in the Papiamentu Haiku of Elis Juliana

by

Hélène Garrett

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

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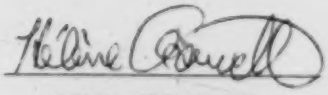

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Abstract

My thesis explores the Papiamentu creole spoken on Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao and offers that it serves as a symbol of identity for its speakers. While initially labeled with derogatory remarks, Papiamentu celebrates presently a new-found status, and is used in the Parliament of the Netherlands Antilles and as instructional language in the elementary schools.

The social value of a creole like Papiamentu is that it provides a symbol of group identity, of togetherness in the wake of past upheavals by colonial powers and subsequent political, economic and religious activity. The speakers of a creole have much power in how that creole is perceived and they are the ones, who by exerting political pressure, can bring about change in its status. The success and the reawakening feelings of pride in Papiamentu are the result of powerful advocates. One such powerful advocate is Elis Juliana. It is his book *Un mushi di HAIKU* which I will explore to hear the internal voice and the external echoes of the Papiamentu speaker.

University of Alberta

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled Identity in the Papiamentu Haiku of Elis Juliana in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Hispanic and Latin American Studies.

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Dr. Anne Malena

Dr. Adam Krims

2. VIII. 2000

Voor Joke Peerenboom

Ga maar zachtjes door
De nacht, verdiende rust en
Vrede tegemoet.

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Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to give an appreciation of the linguistic diversity which exists in the Caribbean in general and to give a look into what helped form the identity of one of its authors. The method of pursuing this goal is to focus as a preliminary step on the existing problems in defining and categorizing pidgins and creoles. The next step involves looking at the discovery of the A-B-C islands, the people encountered and the colonization of these islands until their present day status. As well, I will examine their distinctiveness for it is here that the creole Papiamentu is spoken. A literary genre in the format of haiku has been selected as one aspect of my analysis, not only because of its distinct format, but also because it permits an examination of the author's style and skill. An in-depth analysis of Elis Juliana's work will provide an understanding of the impact historical events, incorporated with religious beliefs and ways of coping within a dominated way of life, have had on the identity of the Papiamentu author. Since the creole Papiamentu is used as the medium for writing haiku by the Antillean author Elis Juliana, I will look into how this creole arose in this particular area of the Caribbean basin.

The investigation of pidgin and creole languages offers one of the most exciting and dynamic areas of study in the realm of language and society. Pidgin and creole languages clearly show that in order to understand them, one must focus not only on the social and historical forces that brought them about, but also on the mental and linguistic factors which accompany language change and development. Pidgins and creoles give us the opportunity to relate linguistic studies to that of social history and geography.

I will briefly look at some central theoretical issues connected with pidgin and creole languages, such as the difficult and even controversial problems of terminology and the origins and development of these languages. Looking initially at the broad subject of pidgins and creoles, I will later focus on a particular part in the world where one of these languages may be found. From the Caribbean area where this research begins it will later zero in with ever diminishing concentric circles, to focus on the islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao, also called the A-B-C islands, the only place in the world where the creole Papiamentu is spoken, with the exception of exiles and emigrants.

The social value of a creole like Papiamentu is that it provides a symbol of group identity, of togetherness in the wake of past upheavals by colonial powers and subsequent political, economic and religious activities. Once viewed as marginal, the study of pidgin languages and creoles has attained in recent years a greater academic respectability. This research aims to show how one such creole, Papiamentu, once ignored even by its speakers, has risen in prestige to become the basis for identity of a people and is at present a powerful tool in the formation and maintenance of stable Dutch-Caribbean societies in Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao. Local governments increasingly allow for sessions to be held in the local creole on the A-B-C islands, and this helps to reduce the pressure from the other related standard language, in this case Dutch.

The speakers of a creole have much influence in how that creole is viewed in their own circles as well as abroad. One such authoritative and powerful speaker is Elis Juliana, the artist, poet, sculptor of Curaçao. After tracing his life, I will finish up this work with a study of his collection of haiku, *Un mushi di HAIKU*, which I have

translated with full permission from Elis Juliana.

Elis Juliana was born in Curaçao on August 8, 1927. He is known for his prose as well as for his poetic writings, almost exclusively in Papiamentu. He frequently recites his own work, mostly anecdotal poems in which either lyric or realism play the upper hand. In more recent work, one can detect a critical view on the economic situation of the Antilles. His caricature of the individuality and personality of the Antillean is very noticeable. With artistic and humorous flair he paints a picture of the typical Antillean (which includes himself) complete with flaws, idiosyncrasies, hopes and aspirations.

Elis Juliana is also known for his children's literature. He is further known as a sculptor, and painter, having had art shows in New York, Brazil, Aruba, Curaçao and Jamaica. Some of his earlier literary works include: Dama di Anochi (1959), Aventura di un Kriki (1960), Wazo riba rondu I (1967) and II (1981), and OPI (1979-83). This last work was the focus of Joceline Clemencia in her own writing called *OPI i e Gran Kamuflahe: Tokante poesia di Elis Juliana* (Clemencia, 1989).

My point of interest however is the collection of haiku written by Elis Juliana. Consequently I will focus on Elis Juliana's *Un mushi di HAIKU* in an attempt to discover what Juliana has known for so long, namely the vitality and the viability of Papiamentu. Because Juliana wrote this booklet of verse in Papiamentu, it was vital to translate it into English for the analysis and understanding thereof. While the initial translation is done, the ideas expressed in the booklet of haiku are so profound that further translation, correction and revision will need to be done in the future.

Juliana shows with his original haiku that although the Papiamentu creole has been influenced by colonial attitudes, missionary policies and other authoritarian

bodies, it can still be the tool towards political liberation as well as artistic expression. Lang (1997) says in *A History of Literature in the Caribbean* that "[a] Creole literature does not just happen; it is willed into existence" (Lang, 1997, 44). This concept is forcefully emphasized by Juliana in his original haiku form in *Un mushi di HAIKU*. When Lang states without any hesitation that "the most successful Creole literature in the Caribbean has been written in Papiamentu" (Lang, 1997, 45) he argues that "the bounty of Papiamentu indicates that literatures prosper not in isolation, but when they absorb influences, through translation (adversarial or not), but also from the full compass of the cultural environment" (ibid.: 49). He goes on to say that though oral and folk traditions may be the beginnings of a literature, maturity comes when this literature is able to successfully compete with those of foreign literatures. Though literary criticism of writings in Papiamentu may not yet be employed on an institutionalized basis, the fact is that individual contributions by authors such as Broek (1990), Clemencia (1989), and Lang (1997) go a long way toward pointing to the literary history of this language. Such focus in turn leads not only to reawakening feelings of identity and of continuity between members of the Papiamentu-speaking community who shared a common past and language, but also in the outside world as it becomes aware of the literary developments of this creole language and its potential.

The diversity of languages spoken in the Caribbean basin and their accompanying distinct identities and resulting social constructs will also be the reason why this region will never become linguistically united in one single language. However, elements from these various languages have seeped into European languages and will continue to do so. The Ananzi character brought by the slaves from the African continent, has emerged in folktale studies in many parts of the world. The

English vocabulary has also been influenced by words such as 'hurricane' (from the Arawak evil spirit Hurikana) and 'jukebox' (from the Gullah word /Juk-/ meaning 'disorderly house') (Hall, 1966, 95). The influence from one culture upon another flowed in both directions. The Antilles came into contact with European music as well as with a variety of foods. A kind of symbiosis is found in Antillean music. For instance, one finds there the waltz, danza, mazurka, polka and the quadrille sometimes coupled with the distinct African flavor or rhythm. The tumba and the tambú, both originating from West-African cultures, are very prevalent during Carnival times in the Antilles. This same blending of European, African and Antillean ways is also seen in Antillean cooking. Besides 'funchi' (Antillean maize dish) and 'giambo' (African dish), the Antillean cuisine also features North-European 'pekelflees' (pickled meats), 'bakalao' (Portuguese cod) and Mediterranean products such as capers, olives and raisins.

Hall (1966) mentions that while pidgins do not enjoy any degree of social esteem, when they become creolized into 'normal' languages by expansion of syntactical structure, vocabulary and standardized orthography, "a creole is just as intimately bound up with the egos of its native speakers as is any other language" (Hall, 1966, 130). Nevertheless, a creole is frequently the object of strong contempt and social prejudice, often contributed by the dominating European language, thereby casting on its native speakers deep psychological and even undefined insecurities. The resulting situation of diglossia, which means 'being torn between two languages', is perhaps which gave poetic expression in the following poem by the Haitian author, Leon Laleau (Hall, 1966, 130-131):

> This obsessed Heart, which does not correspond
> To my language and my clothing,

And upon which bite, like a clamp,
Borrowed emotions and customs
From Europe - do you feel the suffering
And the despair, equal to none other,
Of taming, with words from France,
This heart which came to me from Senegal.

This research will explore how Papiamentu has been able to survive the many years of European power and its relatively minor position in the paradigm of officially recognized standard languages. Although my research will not be able to address all the issues involved with this phenomenon, its central focus will be on the perseverance of this creole, spoken mostly only on the three A-B-C islands which has shaped the inescapable Papiamentu identity of its speakers.

An identity is not a stagnant or static state. As the world around us changes, we who live in it are consequently affected. Social circumstances greatly impact on how we perceive ourselves and how we project ourselves. Thus yesterday's identity will be influenced, yet not wholly erased. The Antillean of today can be expected to show the effects of pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial encounters in the construction of his identity. It is the coming to terms with all of these elements, without a policy of 'pa tapa kara' (to hide one's face) - much like an ostrich does and in this way not acknowledging that outside influences played a role, which facilitates liberating a people's identity and at the same time aids in the reconstruction of a stronger identity. Although social status and imagery as seen in musical productions, dramatic performances, cinematographic and literary contributions are all expressions of identity, this thesis will focus solely upon the literary production of Elis Juliana.

We are all socially constructed. As such the role of ethnicity is extremely important in identity construction. Whereas in the past the A-B-C Antillean might

have wanted to leave uncovered elements of hereditary African roots, a new awakening to national identity is noted, which undoubtedly includes how one feels about his 'mother tongue'. Discarding the debilitating fear of being different in social, racial and linguistic aspects and instead embracing these same distinctions which define a person, is what truly liberates the Antillean. Elis Juliana seems to have liberated himself from the past bondage and joyfully celebrates his Papiamentu identity in his works. This Papiamentu identity then, is what I wish to explore. In my study of Identity in the Papiamentu Haiku of Elis Juliana, I will look into the cultural manifestations of historical influences in the lives of the people in the A-B-C islands. Contemporary cultural manifestations of the process of identity as seen in the production of literary writings by Papiamentu authors will be grounded in analysis and theoretical thinking that can be linked to historical aspects.

Juliana writes in Papiamentu, although not solely so, because he is well aware that by doing so, he will be able to reach the people for some of whom Papiamentu is perhaps the sole means of expression and if not so, then at least the one with which they are the most comfortable. By using the creole language he is assured that his literature will be accessible to young and old, from all social or educational levels. Juliana has chosen to write in Papiamentu and continues to do so perhaps under penalty of being unintelligible to the rest of the world. He adheres to the linguistic, stylistic, rhythmic and ideological intricacies of Papiamentu, promoting and reflecting a discourse that at times shows the positive as well as negative conflictual and even controversial aspects of life in the Antilles. His commitment to Papiamentu as a literary language, is thus the focus of my thesis.

Chapter One

About Pidgins and Creoles

While it is unnecessary for this work to expound in depth the differences between pidgins and creoles, a little time taken here would be beneficial to familiarize the reader with these terms. Many books have been written by linguists about these phenomena and there appear to be as many opinions on the definition and origins of pidgins and creoles as there are authors.

Theoretical terms such as: *sub-stratum, nautical jargon, lingua franca, foreigner-baby talk, relexification, polygenesis, monogenesis, creolization and afro-genesis* are but a few designate labels given to pidgins and creoles and their origins. It is not my aim to add to the cacophonous noises of linguists and creolists from around the world. One has only to open books by Adler (1977), Bickerton (1981), Hall (1966), Hymes (1971), Mühlhäusler (1986), or Reinecke (1975) to get a feel for the many nuances in what should or could be called a pidgin or creole. Far from being exhaustive, my purpose here is mainly to note that there are differences between a pidgin and a creole. Mentioning several possibilities for the history of these languages, I will focus on the existence of one particular creole in the Caribbean Sea.

Pidgins and creoles have existed for decades, but the history of serious studies in these languages goes back only to the 1930's (Hymes, 1971, 31). Until recently these languages were viewed as having little intrinsic value and were said to contain no interesting phenomena. In fact, linguists thought of pidgins and creoles as defective languages and gave them such unflattering names as: "broken English, bastard Portuguese, Negro Dutch and Kitchen Kaffir" (Adler, 1977, 4-5). The criticisms in the

above statement were characteristic of early negative evaluations by those both inside and outside linguistic circles. Until recently pidgins and creoles were seen as and written about as inferior, haphazard, broken and bastardized versions of older longer established languages. Even linguists themselves seemed to shun studying pidgins and creoles, classifying them as aberrant and uninteresting languages. The very first conference on pidgin and creole studies took place only in 1959.

Mühlhäusler, a linguist, noted that a pidgin or a contact language arises in a multilingual situation in which those wishing to communicate, must improvise a code (Mühlhäusler, 1986, 5). In such a situation the basic need to communicate will result in a lingua franca, a trade or contact language, also called a pidgin. Sabir was one such lingua franca, which originated during the Middle Ages (Wardhaugh, 1986, 56). There are various theories proposed to account for the variety of pidgins and creoles found world-wide. The theory of relexification or monogenesis suggests that all present-day European language-based pidgins and creoles derived from a single source, this same lingua franca called Sabir, a proto-pidgin with a Portuguese superstrate which was used by the Portuguese in their trading and expeditions to India, West-Africa and the Far East. Later this proto-type was in turn relexified into pidgin French, English, Spanish, Dutch, German, etc.

The nautical jargon theory suggests that pidgins are derived from the lingua franca that was used on board of the various trading ships. While this theory might explain some similarities in lexicon among pidgins, it seems unlikely to cover the numerous structural analogies. It is not surprising that many pidgins have nautical elements in their lexicon, since the majority are spoken near the sea. The polygenesis theory suggests that pidgins and creoles have a variety of origins; any shared

similarities between them stems solely from the shared circumstances of their origins. A polygenesis theory of origin is behind the work of a number of creolists, particularly that by Hall (1966). The quest to discover a common origin for all pidgins and creoles is the pursuit of the monogenesis theory.

Initially at least, pidgin languages have no native speakers and arise as social solutions to the contact of persons with no common language. A pidgin is essentially a contact language, developed in a situation where different groups of people require some means of communication, but lack a common language. Two factors - communicative pressure and access to a model - will determine the complexity of the generated language, as well as its genetic and typological affiliation with the dominant language (Wardhaugh, 1986, 59). Though a pidgin is not merely a simplification of the dominant or standard language, it may be a restricted one, with few if any subordinate or relative clauses and other complexities such as gender distinction or number. Most pidgins do not become creoles, and remain strictly for commercial, or trade and social interactions. In such instances they retain their use as lingua francas. Perhaps the most important fact to note is that the grammar and the vocabulary of a pidgin are very much reduced, when compared to other languages in general, and that pidgins arise through contact between people with different languages.

A creole often has a jargon or a pidgin in its ancestry and is spoken by a particular speech community or group of related people. According to Bickerton (1988) three different types of creoles have been distinguished: the plantation creoles, the fort creoles and the maroon creoles. Creoles do have native speakers, meaning those who learn it as their mother-tongue. Creoles, like all living languages, undergo change. Through the years they continue to develop, undergo morphological as well

as syntactic expansion, incorporate regularized phonology, and increase in vocabulary (Wardhaugh, 1986, 60). In the past creoles came to be employed not only as administrative auxiliary languages used by the European colonial powers in communicating with linguistically diversified indigenous populations, but also as vehicles for missionary activities and as general link languages between various communities. Each of these expanded uses brought with it an elaboration in vocabulary and structure.

With regard to pidgins and creoles Mühlhäusler observes that it is difficult to study pidgins and creoles as two separate phenomena. They should rather be thought of as two parts of the same linguistic process (Mühlhäusler, 1986, 9). He notes that while it might seem useful to classify the differences between a pidgin and a creole, it remains a daunting task as there are many central theoretical issues connected with these languages, and yet no consensus in linguistic circles. Mühlhäusler explains that "[a]s regards the label 'pidgin', even today it is not used with consistency... it overlaps with terms such as 'lingua franca', 'argot', 'sabir', 'patois', or 'koine', and the definition and delimitations given by professional linguists also differ" (Mühlhäusler,1986,3). Giving his own definition of a pidgin Mühlhäusler states that:

> Pidgins are examples of partially targeted or non-targeted second language learning, developing from simpler to more complex systems as communicative requirements become more demanding. Pidgin languages by definition have no native speakers, they are social rather than individual solutions, and hence are characterized by norms of acceptability (Mühlhäusler, 1986, 5).

The Caribbean area is of particular interest because the many varieties of

pidgins and creoles distributed through this area reflect a rich social and political history. This is one way in which one can explain why a French-based creole is spoken in St. Lucia, which now has English as its official language; why the island of Hispaniola contains both the Spanish-speaking Dominican Republic and the French-creole speaking Haiti; and why Suriname has an English-based creole named Sranan, when the official language there is Dutch.

There are some areas in the Caribbean that are almost exclusively Spanish-speaking and have no surviving pidgins or creoles as a result of the colonizing history; for example the Dominican Republic, Cuba and Puerto Rico. Hall (1966) suggests that this is because the natives died off more rapidly in areas colonized by Spain and that those who did survive, were educated by Spanish priests in standard Spanish. In Mexico, Guatemala, Venezuela and various other places in South America, there are several simplified varieties of Spanish that exist side by side with indigenous languages (Hall, 1966, 6).

Papiamentu, a creole with which I was in contact during my childhood years, is spoken on three islands in the Caribbean Sea, namely Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao. Furthermore there are some twenty thousand Papiamentu speakers living in the Netherlands. From its beginnings until the 1960's this language held an unimportant place among the languages of the world and until recently even its own speakers did not think highly of it. The last forty years saw a marked change in the status of this language not only in its own environment, but also in the linguistic world at large.

Negative feelings toward their own language defined the Papiamentu speaker, and is true in general of many creole speakers. Eva Eckkramer suggests that this attitude is a natural result of longstanding historical and socio-cultural reasons. Frank

Martinus posits various reasons for negative feelings in those who speak Papiamentu by saying that the centuries long domination by Holland coupled with the lack of knowledge of how languages grow into maturity is perhaps a key factor for this feeling that Papiamentu is an inferior language (Eckkrammer,1998,361). According to De Palm, the origin of the lexicon of Papiamentu is that of West Africa, where there were various Portuguese slave-holding camps. The inhabitants from these slave-camps came from various African tribes, whose individual languages were not mutually understandable. In order to facilitate communication between these groups and their Portuguese rulers a lingua franca possibly came into being, a pidgin with mostly a Portuguese-based lexicon. Relexification in the direction of Spanish is what is thought to have happened next. The similarity between Papiamentu and African languages is seen by some linguists to lie not so much in the area of the lexicon, but in the phonogical and syntactical aspects (De Palm, 1969, 368). Eva Eckkrammer explored the relationship between Papiamentu and Spanish and analyzed it to determine if the proximity of Spanish is causing a decreolizing Hispanicization or a relexification of Papiamentu. She concluded that though Papiamentu continues to borrow from the Spanish lexicon, this does not constitute decreolization, but rather points to a relexification of Papiamentu (Eckkrammer, 1998, 360-361).

Papiamentu is the mother tongue of the Antilleans on the "*Benedewindse Eilanden*" (Leeward islands), Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao. The name 'Papiamentu' means speaking in this language and is a derivative of the verb *"papia"*, which is likely from the old Spanish verb *'papear'*. However, there seems to be a negative connotation to this word. On the Spanish speaking island Puerto Rico, the expression 'papiamentu' is still used to signify a language of 'broken Spanish' (De Palm, 1969,

367).

The first mention of a creole in use in the Netherlands Leeward islands, dates to the early 1700's when the missionary Pater Schabel (1704) said that the inhabitants spoke 'a kind of broken Spanish' (Wood, 1972, 56). In this same article Father W.M. Brie wrote that the priests had been preaching in the native tongue, Papiamentu. The oldest Papiamentu text is a collection of two letters in Papiamentu, a correspondence which some say is between husband and wife, others say are love letters between a man and his mistress. The author of the letters is believed to have been one of the Sephardic Jewish congregation, hence the title 'Sephardic Letters'. In pinpointing the origins of Papiamentu, Richard Wood writes:

> Papiamentu may be seen to descend from the Spanish-affiliated pan-Caribbean creole, as do Palenquero in northern Colombia, the former Puerto Rican Creole Spanish, and others yet to be discovered. Palenquero in particular bears a strong resemblance to Papiamentu and contains a similar proportion of apparent Castilian and apparent Portuguese forms. Papiamentu is merely the most resilient and widespread contemporary manifestation of this genetic family, owing its maintenance to various political and socio-economic reasons, not least of which is the almost continuous Dutch [presence and influence], as opposed to Spanish or Spanish-American rule in Curaçao, Aruba and Bonaire since 1634. It need hardly be pointed out that Colombia, Puerto Rico, etc., have never been under Portuguese rule and have had no population group corresponding to the influential Portuguese Jews on Curaçao (Wood, 1972, 21).

To this day there seems to be no consensus as to the origins of the creole Papiamentu. Silvia Kouwenberg (1995) adheres to the theory that the earliest

Papiamentu was based on the Portuguese lexicon, and that later contact with Spanish eclipsed the Portuguese element. Holm (1989) evades the issue of attributing one particular language as the model for Papiamentu by saying that it is "an Iberian based (i.e. Spanish and Portuguese) creole (Holm, 1989, 312). The theory that Papiamentu came from West African Creole Portuguese is propounded at length by some linguists, while others are strong opponent of the Afro-Portuguese hypothesis. The latter theory is again contested by Martinus (1985) who without mincing words writes:

> If the peculiar developments for which Mr. Maduro needs 40 different sources to account for can all be accounted for by West-African Afro-Portuguese creole languages and, to a small extent, by relexification, whilst at the same time other phenomena that Maduro doesn't seem to be able to account for, can only be explained by some typical developments characteristic only of the West-African Creoles, then the PAP [Proto-Afro-Portuguese Creole] theory is the most valid one (Martinus, 1985, 4).

Lang (1997) in "Islands, Enclaves, Continua" links the Caribbean Creoles with non-Caribbean Creoles like Cape Verdean Crioulu and Papua New Guinea Tok Pisin, because they all share historical fates and some linguistic traits. Rather than focusing on the differences between creoles, Lang looks more at their similarities. Commenting on the remarkableness of this Papiamentu creole, Lang states unequivocally that "Papiamentu is the most successful Creole literature in the Caribbean" (Lang, 1997, 45). Concluding his comments he sums up the inherent qualities of a creole saying:

> Proverbs are universal features of literature, both as a rhetorical device and as cultural content. Yet they are concretely particular in the mouth of a native speaker, a virtual warranty that the roots and specificity of a language are being respected. Each Creole is an ***island*** apart unto itself, and proverbs are passwords to its bays and inlets. Protest, an

> inherent reaction against the subversion of a language, posits an ***enclave*** every language must possess for its center to hold, a bastion of sovereignty, be it the grammatical core that defines a language, its corps of faithful speakers, or more tangibly and territorially the realms and spheres in which it prevails as primary vehicle. Pseudonymity, symbol of the multiple identities of Caribbean (Creole) writers (and readers), is on the other hand a function of the ***continua*** that traverse the Caribbean, not only separating but joining its figurative Creole islands and enclaves (Lang, 1997, 51).

Regardless of what viewpoint one espouses as to the origin of Papiamentu, what becomes evident is that through the years, but especially since emancipation (1863), more and more attention has been focused on Papiamentu both from without as well as from within. It is no longer found to be merely a communication method for the common people, or for a particular sector of the community. Instead Papiamentu has risen in prestige to become the recognized language of the A-B-C islands; a vehicle for daily conversation and also for expressing the emotions, thoughts and culture of those who use it.

Chapter Two

The History of the A-B-C Islands and the Rise of Papiamentu

The Netherlands Antilles are composed of two groups of islands: the Curaçao island-group or Leeward group and three islands in the Windward group. The Curaçao island-group includes Curaçao with Little Curaçao, Aruba, and Bonaire with Little Bonaire. Recent history has seen Aruba strive for and obtain a status apart from that of the other Netherlands Antilles. Until the end of 1985, Aruba was a member of the Netherlands Antilles. On January 1986 however, Aruba took on a separate status within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. With this new status, the Kingdom of the Netherlands now has 3 separate components: the Netherlands, the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba. For the purpose of this thesis, the A-B-C islands will be dealt with as a unit, without the recent distinction of the apart status Aruba enjoys. The government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands is still responsible for the defense and foreign affairs of the entire kingdom, but other government tasks are carried out by the individual countries. The three islands in the Windward group of the Lesser Antilles are St. Eustatius, Saba and St. Maarten, the latter being half Dutch and half French. Many miles of Caribbean Sea separate these 6 islands. Together these islands have a population of some 260 000 and spread across 2000 square miles.

The island of Curaçao has a land area of 170 square miles, Aruba has one of 70 and Bonaire has one of 112 square miles. The capital of Aruba is Oranjestad, that of Curaçao is Willemstad and that of Bonaire is Kralendijk. Curaçao is 35 miles from the coast of Venezuela, which has influenced the island through an influx of Spanish culture and the establishment of a large oil refinery to process Venezuelan oil. Aruba

lies 15 miles off the coast of Venezuela and is one of the Caribbean's hottest tourist destinations. Scores of cruise ships drop anchor weekly at the capital-city port of Oranjestad. Miami is only two and a half hours away, while New York City is about four hours away. On a clear day in Aruba, one can see the mountains of mainland Venezuela. Bonaire is inhabited more by pink flamingos than by people, and is as low key as Aruba is high-energy. Bonaire's 112 square miles range from flat and desert-like to hilly and verdant. Bonaire is considered one of the best scuba diving spots on the planet. Its entire coast line, from the high tide mark to a depth of 200 feet, has been declared a national marine park and has been legally protected since 1979.

It is important at this point to elaborate upon the events which led to the discovery of the A-B-C islands, as it will allow the reader to better follow my speculation of the origin of Papiamentu. As one traces the discovery of these islands, one is reminded that Christopher Columbus was not the only one who had been driven by visions of discovering strange, new lands with exotic creatures. Portuguese maritime explorations had gone on for quite some time. Explorers such as Prince Henry the Navigator, Bartolomew Díaz and Vasco da Gama, were but some who had obeyed the call to discovering new maritime routes to India. These explorers had come back with incredible tales of strange peoples and places.

Samuel Eliot Morison (1942) wrote in *Christopher Columbus, Mariner,* that while in 1492 Columbus had had to rely on his persuasive art to induce men to sign up for the first discovery voyage, he had no such problems for his second voyage. Thousands of men and boys were eager to sail with Columbus and share in his fame and fortunes (Morison, 1942, 70). One such enthusiast was Alonso de Ojeda, who was born in Cuenca, Castile, in 1470, into the noble family of Ojeda y Ojeda. Alonso

was the namesake and nephew of the notorious inquisitor Ojeda. By his kinsmen, the inquisitor, Alonso was introduced to the influential Juan Rodríguez de Fonseca, archdeacon of Seville, father confessor of the Spanish Queen and later foremost adviser to the Catholic Kings (De Palm, 1969, 346). As member of the Consejo Reál, Juan de Fonseca had a great deal of power. It was due to these connections that Alonso de Ojeda at age twenty-six became a participant in the second Columbus expedition in 1493. The Spanish monarchs were eager to launch this second voyage, because they wanted to stay ahead of the attempts of the king of Portugal, who was making plans to forestall the Spaniards in their journeys of discovery (Collis, 1976, 145). The aim of this second voyage was, at least so it was claimed, to first of all make converts of the natives to the Christian faith. The second aim was to colonize and the third aim was to undertake further explorations, in order to ascertain that Cuba was indeed the long hoped for Asian mainland (Morison, 1942, 70).

The main organization for this second voyage was in the capable hands of Don Juan de Fonseca, who though a cleric, was said to be extremely adept at assembling soldiers and manning fleets. Fonseca's abilities and influence irked the great Admiral Christopher Columbus, who though he had no real managerial or organizational skill, nevertheless demanded to be consulted on everything. With such a grandiose title as "Very Magnificent Lord, Don Cristóbal Colón, Grand Admiral of the Ocean Sea", he surely was not about to undersell himself or to take orders from de Fonseca (Collis, 1976, 114).

It was mainly due to de Fonseca's continual attempts to undermine Columbus' *capitulación* , originally drawn up at Santa Fé in 1492, that Columbus' earlier exclusive exploration rights were revoked by Queen Isabel in 1495 (Collis,

1976, 63). She thus cleared the way for all her subjects to seek permission to explore, and that is why Alonso was right in line to receive his 'exploring papers'. For the present-day Netherlands Antilles, this proved to be important, for thus it was they came to be discovered by Alonso de Ojeda (De Palm, 1969, 346).

Well after Columbus' second voyage of discovery, Alonso de Ojeda left Cádiz, Spain, on May 16, 1499, as commander of a small squadron, for the Caribbean territory. His navigator also called *piloto mayor* for that journey was the yet unknown but soon to acquire world fame, Amerigo Vespucci of Florence. Juan de la Cosa, another veteran of Columbus' crossings, was enlisted as cartographer and general scientific expert. A third companion on this voyage was Bartolomé Roldán. He had accompanied Columbus on his third voyage, and was therefore somewhat acquainted with the New World.

From records by Juan de la Cosa in the form of a letter and his famous *mapamundi* (world map), one is able to infer that the island they visited on September 5, 1499, was the island of Bonaire. Although far from accurate, this document already includes the outlines of the *Isla de Palo de Brasil* (island of the brasia tree), meaning the island Bonaire. From there they sailed to Curaçao. Though there is no proof that Ojeda actually set foot on the island of Curaçao, Vespucci relates how they had gone ashore in search of water. The Spaniards, upon trekking inland for about a mile, discovered an Indian village where they saw tall natives, who wore pieces of gold in their ears and in their noses (Hartog, 1968, 26).

From Curaçao, Ojeda sailed further along the Venezuelan coast. Aruba lies only 15 miles off the coast of Venezuela, and was thus the next stop. The chart sketched by Ojeda during this trip, became the blueprint from which Juan de la Cosa

made his later well-known map of the area (De Palm, 1969,185). Because the native inhabitants of Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao were so tall, Ojeda called these islands *Islas de los Gigantes* (Island of the Giants) (De Palm, 1969, 186).

Much has been written about the names of the islands. The name Curaçao is said to have come from the fruit *'corasal'*, from the Spanish word for heart *'corazon'* or from its Portuguese equivalent *'coraçao'*. Aruba was thought to have gotten its name from the Indian word *'oruba'* , meaning 'lying in a favorable position' with respect to *Tierre Firme* (the mainland). Bonaire comes from the Indian word *'banare'*, meaning 'low lying island' (De Palm, 1969, 185).

The discovery of the A-B-C islands did not mean much to the Spaniards. These islands were merely *islas adyacentes* (adjacent islands) to the mainland, where neither gold nor pearls were to be found. Yet under the terms of the papal bull *Inter caetera*, these discovered territories were granted to the Spanish kings which made them Spanish domains (Hartog, 1968, 291).

In 1501, Ojeda was charged with the administration of a coastal area in Venezuela as well as that of Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao. De Palm notes that on February 8, 1513, Ojeda made a sworn deposition that in 1499 he had discovered islands which he called *Islas de los Gigantes* (Islands of the Giants), and that besides being appointed governor of Coquibocoa, he also had jurisdiction over *Las islas adyacentes* - Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao. Ojeda never returned to the islands after their discovery (De Palm, 1969,185).

As the hereditary imprints left by the earlier natives on the present day inhabitants are vital in understanding the islands' population, I will introduce them to the reader. The tribes of the islands were part of a large migration of Arawaks, from

the South American continent, who in their canoes extended their travels northward through the entire chain of islands of the Caribbean, all the way to the Bahamas. Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao show sign of having been populated for many years. Archeological evidence in the form of human refuse heaps and pottery shards with carbon dating of 500 AD are proof of human occupancy (De Palm, 1969, 394).

The natives lived in several villages on the islands and were ruled by a *cacique*. The Caiquetios, from the Arawak tribes, had canoes, called *piraguas* , which were made of hollowed-out logs. They used these *piraguas* to fish and to catch giant sea turtles as well as seals. They also traded with related tribes on the mainland (De Palm, 1969, 185).

Contemporaries of the Caiquetios called them *"apacibles, benignos, y obedientes, ... gente muy pulida y limpia"* (gentle, kind, and obedient, ... neat and clean people). Pedro Aguado (as quoted in Hartog, 1969, 29) says in his *Historia de Venezuela* that the Caiquetios were *"gente de muy buena distinción e inclinación y amigos de los españoles"* [unique people and well disposed and friends of the Spanish -my translation]. It is important to note that the history of this conquest was written from the perspective of the Spanish conquerors. Thus, those who opposed or resisted the Spaniards were not written about as benignly as the Caiquetios were. Through the years, at least to the Spaniards, the islands retained their inutile status. Only a few Spaniards were stationed on the islands in order to oversee the work done by the Caiquetios in their hire, to maintain order and to be on the look-out for any potential over-takers. The resident Caiquetios remained under the direct leadership of their caciques, who themselves were under the direction of the Spanish authorities. Many of the Caiquetios received Spanish names upon their baptism into the Roman

Catholic faith.

The Caiquetios of Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao were in the first place hunters and fishermen. Their agriculture was grown in *conucos* and was limited to the growing of banana trees, pumpkins, tubers, and root crops. The Spaniards introduced oranges, pomegranates, limes, tobacco and sugar cane. It must be noted that the soil and flora of the islands are influenced by semi-arid climatic conditions. There is at times of drought little natural grass growth, and vegetation is sparse unless actively cultivated. Especially where salt and wind reign, one finds vegetation lacking (De Palm, 1969, 186, 187). There are exceptions though. In a recent communication a friend from Aruba wrote: "We have had rain from September 1999 until this week, February 7, 2000, and therefore the islands are green, covered with lush vegetation and birds, lizards and iguana. The goats and sheep have lots to eat. It is really quite beautiful" (Betty Ratzlaff).

The animals introduced by the Spaniards, goats, sheep, pigs, cattle and horses, multiplied at an amazing rate. When the Dutch took over possession in 1634, they counted 2000 cattle, 1000 goats, 9000 sheep, 800 horses and an indefinite amount of pigs (De Palm, 1969, 187).

The Caiquetios, who belonged to the Arawak-Maipure family group, still lived in the stone age when Ojeda discovered the A, B, C islands. These Indians were a peaceful people living under the leadership of their cacique, a sort of priest, medicine-man, prophet and village chief combined. For their implements they used materials native to the islands, such as shell, coral, and wood to make hatchets, chisels, disks and eating utensils. Diorite, basalt, quartz and jasper, which are all found on the islands were used to make decorations and amulets (Hartog, 1968, 13).

The Caiquetios gave their implements the petaloid shape that is typical of all Arawak products, as contrasted with that of the Caribs. The Caiquetios were tall, light skinned people, who walked about naked, covering only their private parts with a small piece of woven cloth (Hartog, 1968, 2). They lived in small rectangular cabins that consisted of one room, had a saddle-shaped roof and walls that were covered with mud. Light and fresh air entered through the opening that served as a door. With an average temperature of 26 degrees C., this was all that was needed. Windows did not appear in their buildings until after the arrival of the Spanish, since the Caiquetios slept in hammocks (Hartog, 1961, 8).

The main export items during Spanish times were hides, brazil or brasia wood, salt and a type of cheese. The Spanish employed the Caiquetios. The tannin needed to cure the hides was readily available from the divi-divi tree pods. This curious tree, buffeted by the prevailing North-east trade winds, becomes strangely shaped by it. The saying is that one cannot get lost on the islands, because the divi-divi trees always show at least one direction (De Palm, 1969, 187).

The religion of the Caiquetios was animistic. They worshipped their ancestors, the sun and moon, and several animals. According to Goslinga (1979) the central figure of their religion was the evil spirit Hurakane. The word hurricane is derived from this Indian god who played a dominant role in the lives of the Caiquetios. He was honored at all important events, and was consistently consulted on all matters of significance to the tribe. Goslinga notes that there were strong political as well as cultural bonds between the Indians on the coast of the mainland and those on the islands. "The *cacique* (the priest) of Paraguaná, the Venezuelan peninsula east of the Lake of Maracaibo, was recognized as the highest authority of all

the Caiquetios" (Goslinga, 1979, 6).

Archeologists have found evidence of Caiquetio funereal practices. For the most part, the dead were buried in the fetal or sitting position. Another exceptional practice was discovered in Sabaneta and Ceru di Noko on Aruba. Here skeletons were found dismembered, and placed in huge earthen-ware pottery. This type of burial is similar to the Guene of North-Eastern Colombia (De Palm, 1969, 187).

All humans exhibit an innate desire to communicate with others. The Caiquetios were no different. They had a native language which did not vanish with the coming of foreign rulers. Although the language of the Indians is still a matter of speculation, it seems plausible to suggest that in order to communicate with the Spanish a pidgin was created which later became creolized into Papiamentu. Various theories exist as to the base for this creole. Generally the view is held that the origin of Papiamentu dates to the importation of African slaves, who learned an imperfect nautical jargon on board slave ships. While it is true that during Spanish rule many Indians were either killed or exported to Santo Domingo to be put to work in the copper mines, it must be noted that on Aruba at least, the Indians were not exterminated. On the contrary, Aruba was considered somewhat of an Indian reservation, thanks mainly to the effort of Juan de Ampués (De Palm, 1969, 22). Since it was the Dutch who started to import African slaves to the islands some 130 years after the discovery of the islands, it seems unlikely that Papiamentu came to the islands as the Portuguese ship-board jargon of the African slaves. A far better argument is that Papiamentu is a Spanish-based creole which came into being as a contact language used by the resident Indians and the local or visiting Spaniards prior to the arrival of the slaves.

In the early stages, Spanish and Portuguese were one language of an Ibero-Romance nature. By Ibero-Romance is meant the languages occupying the Iberian Peninsula and includes the family group of Portuguese, Castilian and possibly Catalan (Bergquist, 1981, 20). Because these languages belong to the same Peninsular group, and have existed together for many centuries in a sharply defined area, one might say that they enjoy a kind of symbiosis. They offer similar solutions to the same linguistic problems, indicating a common mental attitude in their speakers. Yet though they have experienced the same influences under the same conditions, each has its own history and developed into a separate language and identity. The separation of Portugal from Spain occurred in 1143, when Afonso wrested the title of King from Alfonso VII, and seized the city of Lisbon with the aid of a crusading army. This feat was the beginning of the separate kingdom Portugal, the grammatical structure of the language, however retained similarities with Spanish (De Palm, 1969, 338).

Linguists have ascribed the /r/ to /l/ interchange noted in many Caribbean creoles to a Portuguese element (Taylor, 1977, 157). No such interchange exists in Papiamentu. A reduction of all verbs to the infinitive and the use of temporal/aspectual particles such as /ta/ in conjunction with infinitives, are striking linguistic features that occur in Papiamentu, but not in African dialects. This gives strength to the polygenetic theory of Romance-based creoles, with the possibility that creolized Spanish dialects may have developed in several locations at the same time, rather than by relexification of a Portuguese-based creole.

To this day Arawak place names like Guadirikiri, Jaburibari, Basiruti and Andirikuri appear on the islands. Many believe that during the 130 year interval before the arrival of slaves and their Portuguese-based pidgin, a Spanish-based mixture

developed, and over the years through further contact with other languages, a melodious creole called Papiamentu came into existence. The Papiamentu of today is heavily influenced by Spanish, but it contains many words from other languages and reflects the polyglot influence of several hundreds of years. There is a small group of linguists who believe that Papiamentu originated during the earlier period from the time of discovery until 1634 when the A-B-C islands were Spanish colonies. This hypothesis is seen by others as being in conflict with the view or belief that the Arawak Indians who inhabited the islands during Spanish rule, expressed themselves in normal Spanish.

A lot has changed since the time of Ojeda's discovery of Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao. Papiamentu, which was the pidgin created to communicate between groups of people, became the mother-tongue of the A-B-C islands. Although Papiamentu is only at most 300 years old, it is spoken of with pride by the population of the Antilles. Papiamentu is spoken by all social classes, and has become prized as a symbol of identity. Ojeda's chance discovery of Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao has had long lasting linguistic impact on the indigenous language of the original inhabitants.

During the years that followed ownership of the A-B-C islands changed hands several times. In 1636, near the end of the Eighty Years' War between Spain and Holland, the Dutch took possession and remained in control for nearly 2 centuries. Curaçao became an important trading post and a base for excursions against the Spanish. Conflicts in Europe and in the Americas in the 18th century led to Curaçao becoming a commercial meeting place for pirates, American rebels, Dutch merchants, Spaniards and Creoles alike. In 1805 during the Napoleonic Wars, the English briefly took control over the islands but withdrew a scant three years later, only to occupy

them again in 1807. In 1816 however, Dutch rule was restored once more.

Spanish, the language of the discoverers continued to function as an important second language during the early years of Dutch rule. Later with the importation of slaves, their West-African dialects blended with Dutch and Papiamentu to further blend it into a language that allowed inter-communication between these various groups. Papiamentu is a beautiful creole that developed from Arawak Indian, Spanish, Dutch, West-African dialects, Portuguese and even a smattering of English and French.

When I say that Papiamentu is a Spanish-based creole, I propose that it is a language which came into being through a process of creolization. The language which provided input to the process was Spanish, that is, a 'broken' or pidginized variety of Spanish used by non-native Spanish speakers. The output is not Spanish but a new language based on Spanish. There is no single clear cut criterion of what constitutes a language, although the most fundamental issue seems to be the existence of grammatical structure. By grammatical structure I simply mean describability in terms of a finite set of grammatical rules which include lexical, syntactic, semantic and phonological rules. With these in mind though it becomes difficult to account for the numerous instances of more than one language belonging to a single unbroken continuum of grammatical structures such as Portuguese, Spanish and Catalan on the Iberian Peninsula.

The attitude of its users in many cases seems to be the deciding factor in determining whether a given code is considered a language or a dialect. Many Papiamentu speakers consider their language to be a 'real' language and hold it in high esteem although negative attitudes are still encountered. While this creole is now

spoken by all races and social classes in familiar conversation on the islands, a scant thirty years ago this was not the case and many students for example were discouraged from speaking it on the playground during recess. Papiamentu has become sufficiently destigmatized so that its adoption as the medium of education is a 'fait accompli' as far as the lower grades in elementary schools are concerned. Papiamentu classifies as a language because it has a grammatical structure all its own and is not a dialectal or historical continuation of Spanish. The structural gap separating these two languages is evidenced by their mutual unintelligibility.

One indication of the standardization of Papiamentu is the growing body of literary works written in Papiamentu by native poets, critics, folklorists and even pedagogues. During the 19th century, Papiamentu was generally considered unsuitable for literary expression and authors of the islands used Spanish for literary purposes. Today however, Antillean authors produce a steady output of high quality literature in their mother tongue: poems, novels, folktale, translations of 'European' plays and there is even a Papiamentu version of Pygmalion.

Standardized orthography is still a sore point between the islands. While earlier texts reflected a heavy Dutch influence in spelling conventions, recent proposals for a standardized Papiamentu orthography have recommended adherence to an etymological principle using Spanish spelling for words derived from Spanish, and Dutch symbols for Dutch derived words. Since it has been estimated that over 80% of Papiamentu words are Spanish in origin, the predominant orthographic influence is Spanish. The Spanish vowel symbols are in a sense simpler, more consistent and more 'phonetic' than their Dutch counterparts and this is undoubtedly why 'u' has won out over 'oe' as a marker of high/back/rounded vowels and

Papiamentu, once spelled as Papiamentoe, has now obtained its present spelling. Being classified thus as a 'proper' language, Papiamentu is subject to regional dialects, vernacular styles and various formal/informal registers both in the spoken as well as in the written forms.

In the case of Papiamentu, it must be noted that until the early 1950's not much importance as to its status among languages of the world was given to the creole both by its own speakers , as well as by the linguistic world at large. In fact, it was not until 1995 that voices were raised in the Papiamentu speaking community to proclaim that Papiamentu was a language in its own right and that as such, it should have equal status as the other languages of the world and that it ought to be taught in schools. A task force was raised to discuss bringing Papiamentu into the schools. The year 1998 was declared the Year of Papiamentu in Aruba and attention was focused on this issue. The school year 1998 - 1999 was the first year that Papiamentu was officially taught as a new language subject in school.

It has been said that Papiamentu is spoken slightly differently (with a slight accent), on the three islands, and some words are used differently. On Curaçao for example, Papiamentu is spoken with a much tighter and shorter expression, while the Papiamentu of Aruba is spoken in a softer and more relaxed manner. The Papiamentu of Bonaire is a mixture of the two. As far as orthography is concerned, Aruba's spelling of Papiamentu is based on the etymology of the words, while Bonaire's and Curaçao's spelling tries to keep as close to the present pronunciation of the words. Recent attempts to bring the two ways of spelling together have not been very successful.

This reawakening to the value and importance of Papiamentu has been noted

by foreigners and locals alike. Aart Broek mentions that the islanders have stopped looking outward to the concept of Western culture and have turned their vision inward instead. He writes:

> Halfway through this century both literary and non-literary eyes on the island[s] ... stopped gazing at idealized concepts of Western culture...the islands own socio-cultural patterns, peculiarities and foibles came into sight. 'Difference' and 'unicity' rather than 'acculturation' and 'assimilation' were being promoted... The age-old oral tradition in the native creole was one of the other aspects to draw attention, at first hesitantly but with the years more confidently. Stories, songs, tales, proverbs, rhymes, riddles, jokes, aphorisms and the like were collected, published or reinterpreted via a new medium: the radio. Particularly the recordings, compilations of texts and the analyses of Nicolaas van Meeteren, Nilda Pinto, Antonio Maduro, Sonia Gomers, father Brenneker, Elis Juliana, Renee Rosalia and Rose Marie Allen have been influential in the process of reassessment of the oral tradition in Papiamentu (Broek, 1995, 1996).

Whereas in earlier days one had to resort to Dutch, Spanish or English literature, there would now be poetic writing in Papiamentu capable of expressing a multitude of moods, ranging from melancholic to joyful. With this newly discovered capability of Papiamentu to be a powerful vehicle of expression, a sense of self-esteem and sense of pride was discovered, and thus a sense of identity came to the foreground.

Alternative voices in Papiamentu were now heard, such as those from Nydia Ecury, Henry Habibe, Frederico Oduber - all three are from Aruba, where the African cultural traces are far less prominent and have even been minimized. Aart Broek contends that Elis Juliana is very much a defender of the creolization concept and has

been performing a 'delicate poetic dance' for decades, while he shows himself to be both sharply critical and warmly sympathetic of Afro-Antillean life styles and aspirations.

Scattered all over the Caribbean basin between the North and South American continents, many islands bathe in bright colors, like pearls in the sun. The six islands that comprised until recently the Netherlands Antilles are no exception. The islands in the Caribbean area have much in common in outward appearance. They all have lovely bays and inlets, beautiful flora, prickly cacti, overgrown mountains, modern buildings and dilapidated ruins of bygone eras. Historically these islands are all related in that they were all (at one time) inhabited by 'Indians', that they were occupied around the 15th century by the Spanish king and belonged for a longer or shorter period to the Spanish Empire. In spite of this superficial similarity, these islands have their own characteristics, their own personality, due partly to slight variations in climate, soil compositions and different racial combinations in their population. Mostly they differ in their historical development.

One of the earliest communications of their uniqueness are the artistic expressions by the original inhabitants of the A-B-C islands, the Caiquetios, and are mostly limited to ritual drawings found in the caves of the three Leeward islands. To this day one can view these ritualistic drawings in the caves scattered on the islands, which point to an earlier civilization. Furthermore there is evidence of decorative art in the artifacts discovered by archeologists.

As noted earlier, whereas Spain could maintain control over the almost impenetrable South American mainland, the Caribbean area proved to be almost powerless against the relentless great sea-faring nations in Europe. These nations with

great nautical experience fancied footholds in the New World. Foreign invaders, English, French and Dutch came swarming into the Caribbean waters. Consequently many a battle was waged and one after the other these islands in the lush Caribbean basin fell in other hands. Some were captured, recaptured, conquered and discarded when found not to be profitable to European coffers.

The Dutch arrived in this area during the last stages of their war of independence against Spain. Their conquest of the islands was not one fueled by the lust for gold or adventure. It was the need for salt which forced the Dutch to defy King Philip II of Spain. In the past the Dutch had acquired salt from the Iberian peninsula, but with their rebellion against Spanish domination in the form of the famous Eighty Years War, the Spanish King put a stop to this trade. Hundreds of Dutch merchant men and salt carriers were seized in Spanish ports and their crews were imprisoned (Goslinga, 1979, 20).

Forced thus by necessity, the Dutch ventured further south in their quest for salt, which they found of excellent quality and in inexhaustible quantities in the Caribbean area. The powerful Dutch fleet under the direction of excellent leaders such as Captain Jan Jariksz, Hendrik Jacobszoon Lucifer, Joost van Trappen, Pieter Schouten, Admiral Piet Heyn and Peter Stuyvesant, was able to pave the way to the eventual possession of Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao (Goslinga, 1979, 22-29). To this day elementary school children remember Admiral Piet Heyn's legendary prowess in the form of a song with the following lyrics:

Piet Heyn, Piet Heyn.
Piet Heyn zijn naam is klein.
Zijn daden waren groot.

Hij heeft gewonnen de zilveren floot.
[Piet Heyn, Piet Heyn,
Piet Heyn his name is small,
His deeds were great.
He has conquered the silver fleet (the Spanish silver armada)].

Goslinga noted that when the Dutch settled on the A-B-C islands they did not trust the Caiquetios, as most of them had been baptized and had been given Spanish names, and thus "were tainted with Roman Catholicism and suspected of being covert allies of the Spaniards..."(Goslinga, 1979, 109). Enslaved Arawak Indians of the Caribbean, fishermen and hunters, not used to hard plantation labor and without immunity against European diseases, were treated so harshly that they often preferred to commit suicide. Between 1492 and 1[illegible] some 200 000 Arawak Indians perished in the Caribbean area. As human labor was needed, slavery was adopted. Although the institution of slavery was unfamiliar to the Dutch, it soon became of utmost importance to them. Wim Bosman, a Dutch slaver wrote in 1701 in a letter to a friend:

> We send them on board of our ships at the very first opportunity before which their masters strip them of all they have on their backs; so that they come on board stark naked, as well women as men; in which condition they are obliged to continue, if the master of the ship is not so charitable (which he commonly is not) as to bestow something on them to cover their nakedness (Museum Kurá Hulanda, Curaçao).

Around 1700 the Curaçao islands held "4000 slaves, most of whom came from the Congo and Angola, although blacks from Elmina, the Dutch fortress on the West Coast of Affica, were considered to be good house slaves" (Goslinga, 1979, 108).

Goslinga further stated that slavery was virtually unknown on Aruba, and the demand for black laborers to work the salt pans on Bonaire was satisfied with about 200 slaves (Goslinga, 1979, 111). Aruba was never in the grip of big landownership or plantation-economy and hence without slavery in its ugliest form.

One of the biggest legacies of the Dutch is their legendary religious tolerance. The clearest proof of this in the Antilles is the historical presence of the Jewish Community. When Johannes van Walbeeck and Pierre le Grand conquered Curaçao in 1634, they brought with them Samuel Coheño, a Portuguese Jew, who served as translator. In 1651 a total of 50 Jewish colonists arrived in Curaçao and created a Jewish community on the island which was called *Mikvé Israël* (Israeli Hope). This community grew steadily during the first half of the 17th century when Spain, after conquering Portugal exiled the Portuguese Jews both from Portugal itself as well as from Brazil. Driven out of their own communities, the Portuguese Jews fled to Amsterdam. The Brazilian Portuguese Jews mostly went to Curaçao where in many cases they were soon joined by their relations from Amsterdam. In Holland as well as in Curaçao, they enjoyed freedom to handle their commerce and practice their religion at will. These Sephardic Jews built the first synagogue in the Western hemisphere, as well as the first Jewish cemetery called Beth Haim, which is unique with its beautifully carved tombstones, many of them bearing Portuguese inscriptions (Goslinga, 1979, 102). The Jews became adept exporters of colonial goods and between 1670 and 1900 were the owners of a fleet of more than 1200 *zeilschepen* (sailing ships). From that time of the wealthy Jewish commerce became known the earliest piece of writing in Papiamentu. It was a letter of a Jewish merchant to his wife [or mistress], the famous Pietermaai letter of 1776, which is entirely in

Papiamentu (De Palm, 1969, 256). The letter in question is a personal communication from a Curaçaoan Sephardic (Portuguese) Jew to his pregnant wife or mistress (Neophilologus 66.3 , 1982). Interestingly the Papiamentu of that era is not much different from its present day written form.

The same tolerance one finds at the present time on the islands with regards to religious freedom is also evident in the 'apparent' absence of racial discrimination. At least today anyone of any race or color has the same rights and possibilities and is socially accepted as a friend or neighbour. Living on the islands, says Goslinga, are people from 47 countries and islands, people of 22 various nationalities, of all races and half a dozen religions. Whites, colored, Asians and blacks from America, Europe, other islands in the Caribbean area, from the Far East and from South America live in harmony. This new mixture found on the islands and settlers from other areas gave rise to the 'New Antillean.'

The 'New Antillean' was a mixture of various European nationalities - Spanish, Dutch, English, Portuguese -, and descendants of the original Caiquetios as well as descendants of African slaves. The diffusion of peoples, languages and cultures of substantially African origin (due to their large numbers), has turned the Caribbean region into a major component of Afro-America, and many of the languages now spoken in this area, reveal richly one aspect of the immense contribution African civilizations have made to the contemporary New World. The original pre-European cultural complexity and diversity was irrevocably transfigured by changes which saw some aboriginal cultures either drastically altered or modified, or even exterminated. European ideologies, colonial economies and politics, as well as religious fervor were imposed with the result that brand new cultures sprang to life.

Douglas Taylor (1977) quotes Maurice Freedman in stating that "[a] language is at once a partial index of a culture to an outsider and a selective meta-language in which a community can express some but not all of their social and cultural life" (Taylor, 1977, 3). Taylor avows that the culture of a people is best understood in the every day language of its speakers. Looking thus in depth at writings produced by Papiamentu speakers will bring to light their social and cultural identity. The aforementioned Pietermaai letter of 1776 was described in "History of the Jews of the Netherlands Antilles" (Cincinnati, 1970) by the late Isaac and Suzanne Emmanuel, although these historians did not provide a translation nor any comments regarding the actual whereabouts of the letter. It was Antoine Maduro, a Curaçaoan historian of Papiamentu who realized that this was possibly the earliest known document written in the creole Papiamentu and who was able to provide a linguistic commentary on the letter. He was also the one who discovered two legal declarations in Portuguese and Papiamentu dated January 16, 1776 which have direct bearing on this mysterious letter. His search led him to find out the identity of the writer, Abraham da Costa Andrade Jr., as well as that of the addressee, Sara de Ishac Pardo e Vaz Farro, who was his lover and not his wife as was earlier believed to be the case. She was in fact the wife of Selomoh Vaz Farro (Neophilogus 66.3, 1982, 367-76).

Cultural development in the 19th century was extremely slow. A few clergymen ventured into the literary field. One of the earliest literary writings was by schoolteacher Hermanus J. Abbring, who wrote about his feelings of his stay in Curaçao in a booklet called *Weemoedstonen* (Songs of Nostalgia). The earliest known newspaper in the Antilles, the St. Eustatius Gazette was published from 1790 to 1793 (Broek, 1995, 1). The *Curaçaosche Courant* [The Curaçaoan Newspaper]

boasts a publication from 1816 until the present, and is an invaluable source of socio-cultural, political and economic information. The newspaper printed poems written by Antilleans in Dutch, Papiamentu and Spanish, and though these poems may not have been up to present-day standards, they nevertheless were vehicles of literary expression written from an Antillean mindset.

Broek mentions in *Literary Writing in Papiamentu* that because many Latin American exiles made Curaçao their home, they naturally wrote literary works in Spanish. In July 1886 the first issue of *Notas y letras: Semanario de literatura y bellas artes* appeared on Curaçao, a collection of poetry, prose, essays, reviews and musical scores by Latin American authors from among others countries Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico and Puerto Rico. However, by the 18th century Papiamentu literary writings became the preferred outlet for Antillean authors.

In more recent years there came many Antillean poets, painters and musicians who made a name for themselves and are well known. These artists display various styles. Thus we have the conventional painter like Theo van Delft, Herbert Bayé, and Juan Chabaya Lampe. The latter better known as Padú Lampe was also a pianist and composer of Antillean dance music. He was one of the most popular Antillean musicians known also outside the Antillean areas by his stage name 'Padú del Caribe'. His career is an eye opening example of how the Antillean artist was able to carve a name as well as a unique style regardless of the limited access to the newest recording techniques. He is well known for among other, the Aruban *volkslied* (National song) - *'Aruba dushi tera'* (Aruba, beloved land). Another style of art is called by some 'primitive art' or 'naive art'; this art form shows some similarities with a Haitian art form. One artist who practices this type of art is Elis Juliana who often illustrates his

own books.

It was largely due to international interest in 'marginal languages' that the study of Papiamentu became the cherished object of native speakers of the language. As Papiamentu came to be seen as a language in its own right, its prestige grew. Studies on various aspects of Papiamentu began to appear, dictionaries were compiled and several how-to books were written on learning this language. This new-found enthusiasm was now not limited to the native Papiamentu speakers, but extended to the outside world. University texts now mention without blinking an eye Papiamentu examples and graduate students are granted studies in this interesting language.

Chapter Three

Elis Juliana's Choice of the Haiku Genre

Several critics have written about Elis Juliana. Joceline Clemencia wrote in *OPI i e Gran Kamuflahe (Tokante poesia di Elis Juliana)* [OPI and the Great Camouflage (about the poetry of Elis Juliana)] about her motivation to write about this Antillean poet whose poems are written in Papiamentu and which she has translated into Dutch [my translation into English]:

Motivation

> Different considerations have brought me to the decision to do an in-depth study into the literary world of Juliana. For a long time now I was wondering why people were portraying Elis Juliana as a humoristic author, as van de Wal and van Wel wrote on page 66 of their book *Met eigen stem* : " ...Mainly a humorous and joking touch strikes you". This while I can't find any humor that does not combine black and cynical, while Juliana himself declared that his face is so serious because since his childhood his mother warned him not to smile all the time, because people who always laugh are not to be trusted ...There was also, perhaps as primary motivation, my own curiosity to get right to the core of this fascinating work which I came to understand while reading about Juliana. It was not easy to distinguish the necessary facts, since there have been few systematic studies done of our literature. This proved to be the first of various problems that had to be solved in order to complete my research: that of getting information. To get the needed information, I even dared to ask señor Elis Juliana for an interview, a privilege which he acceded to and for which I once again express my gratitude, the same goes for Father, ethnologist and poet, Paul Brenneker, for the poet Nydia Ecury and for señora Lucille Berry-Haselth...The second problem I had was with

> the language. I found myself having to translate all the poems, the interview and other sources I had used in Spanish. From time to time I felt myself to be in a linguistic labyrinth: Papiamentu, Dutch, and Spanish all tried to take my total attention... Translate is what we Antilleans have had to do constantly. Read and write in a foreign language... Live in two worlds connected by a bridge. Is this some sort of cultural synthesis? Think in one language and have feeling in your own language? And finally I found myself as a *'yu'i Korsou* [child of Curaçao], before one of the classic dilemmas of Caribbean society, that is to say, the taboo which rests on our past theme of slavery and colonization; a frequent theme of Juliana's. And I decided, following Juliana's example, to bring this theme to the foreground every time the research asked for it (Clemencia, 1989,1-2).

Much of the same sentiments Clemencia expressed could be said about the production of this work. Translation of *Un mushi di HAIKU* proved to be far from a mechanical process, and one which like Clemencia said, is apt to leave the translator in a linguistic labyrinth. In order to share Juliana's haiku with the world, they had to be translated into English. Translations are often fueled by a desire to make possible cross-cultural and cross-linguistic communication. Walter Benjamin (1923) states that translation is a mode and that in order to understand it as a mode, one must return to the original. He further avers that translation comes after the original work was written, and thus gives the original work continued life (Schulte and Biguenet, 1992, 72-73). Translation thus assures longevity of literary writings. Translating Juliana's haiku was this author's attempt at providing longevity of his writing in the non-Papiamentu speaking world.

Translating between languages which are so very different from each other,

requires fairly strenuous cultural and mental gymnastics. It is not only in grammar that languages differ, but also in writing styles which characterize that language's cultural perspectives and way of thought. Where one language stresses clarity of thought, the other delights in a format which shows subtlety, while yet an other language may employ flowery, convoluted language. Thus I posit that translation is an intricate activity that not only involves rendering a text from one language into another, but also involves transposing a culture to the receiving readers. It is important to note that different cultures open onto different metaphysics, and that they prefer different referential elements and contextual cues. Such preferences do not make any culture inferior or superior, although a certain hierarchy does seem to exist.

Literary translation has been practiced in Europe since the age of the Romans. Friedrich said that for the Romans, translation from the Greek texts came to mean "transformation in order to mold the foreign into the linguistic structures of [their] own cultures" (Schulte and Biguenet, 1992, 11). Venuti explains that in translating a foreign text, the original text is partially altered and supplemented with features peculiar to the translating language (Venuti, 1998, 5). While it is possible to translate a text word for word, in other words literally, in order to convey a maximum of the original content or meaning in the target culture, it is also possible to translate a text concentrating on the sense for sense translation. Nevertheless, all translations must show a measure of fidelity to the original text.

Knowing the intended readership and the purpose of the translation will determine how the translator deals with implied but unstated content and foreign cultural assumptions. Venuti states that good translation is that which minoritizes, and thus it releases the 'remainder' by "cultivating a heterogeneous discourse"

(Venuti, 1998, 11). With the author's permission, the translator may rearrange, reorganize or even rewrite some sections in order to present the author's point more clearly to the intended audience, thereby possibly overstepping the boundaries of strict translation. However, the translator must strive to remain true not only to the essence, but also to the style and tone of the work in the source language, while at the same time render it in a way that is understandable to someone from a very different culture or mind set. What becomes very clear is that translation is a balancing act that requires sensitivity, intuition, a combination both of humility and professional pride and extreme vigilance. As humility and arrogance make strange bedfellows, let me hasten to explain that while I wish to show a certain deference to the original author, at the same time I maintain a measure of arrogance in assuming that I possess the ability to become the author in another language.

Recalling Joceline Clemencia's motivation on writing about Elis Juliana, my own motivation mimics hers, except I wish to focus on the collection of original haiku written by Elis Juliana. The haiku is a traditionally Japanese form of poetry that consists of 17 syllables arranged in three unrhymed lines of respectively five, seven and five syllables, and employs highly evocative allusions and comparisons, often on the subject of nature or one of the seasons. Originating in the thirteenth century, haiku became an independent form in the late sixteenth century and since the late seventeenth century it has become the most popular Japanese form of poetry, perhaps largely due to Matsuo Basho (1644-1694). Basho greatly enriched Japanese poetry with his 17 syllable (or breath lengths) haiku form, imbuing it with the spirit of Zen Buddhism and making it an accepted medium of artistic expression. The brevity of his poems fused together lyrical concepts in defense of Nature. This form

of poetry was adopted in the West early in the twentieth century.

Typically, a haiku symbolizes a sensation of the poet and evokes a train of thought or image in the mind of the reader. The haiku expresses a single idea, image or feeling. One might say that a haiku is a Lilliputian lyric in which is caught a thought in a flash of swift impression; a little piece of verse that expresses a delicate or ingenious thought, an emotion or a sense or feeling. The haiku poet seeks not to explain these moods or impressions, but seeks only to capture them in words, to sketch as if from life, without polishing the form, thus maintaining the essence of the haiku. The limited form of this type of poetry obliges the poet to speak clearly using few words, as each word in the haiku is of extreme importance.

Interesting to begin with is Juliana's choice of title *Un mushi di HAIKU* [a measure (in this case a 'dram' = a measure or a shot of liquor) of haiku]. The word *mushi* is not used in certain Papiamentu communities. In Aruba for example, a shot of liquor would be translated as *'un trago di likido'*. What comes across from the title is that Juliana tells us his poetry can be taken as short, but potent and concentrated conceptual ideas; short and swift flashes of impressions. In his introduction Juliana writes:

> Ku publikashon di *Un mushi di HAIKU* mi ke hasi e promé intento pa nos lesadónan sera konosí ku e estilo di literatura hapones akí i pa demostrá tambe e balor i e forsa di nos lenga Papiamentu. Mi ke apuntá sí ku e haikunan akí ta original i no ta tradukshon di haiku hapones. Nos lenga Papiamentu tin su rikesa! (Juliana, 1993, 4).

> [With the publication of *Un mushi di HAIKU* my first intent is for our readers to become acquainted with this style of Japanese literature and to demonstrate also the value and the vitality of our Papiamentu

language. I do want to point out though that these haiku are original and are not translations of Japanese haiku. Our Papiamentu language has its riches!]

Juliana's stance in his introduction seems to be adversarial. It is a defensive stance that points to the fact that even though Papiamentu is a creole and therefore may be considered not quite in the same category as other full blown languages, it is yet capable of expressing a highly rigorous Japanese form of poetry. In choosing to translate this book, my aim is to show that I too have a role to play in constructing a form of representation of a foreign culture (Venuti, 1998, 67). In an article in Kristóf (1993) magazine, Elis Juliana wrote that a haiku is so compact that even though each word is so simple and understandable, it is only after reading the poem that its profoundness and its secret is discovered. Juliana states that the pleasure of reading haiku lies not merely in the understanding thereof, but also in the moment of looking inward into the poem, much like looking upon a flower that is opening. Thus, infers Juliana, the very heart of the work becomes visible.

Juliana further points out that since the thirteenth century, Japanese noblemen in the imperial palaces used to compose haiku. It was not until the beginning of this century that the Western world, Europe in particular, started to see the value of this form of expression. Juliana uses here a perfect example, where my own translation does not even come close in savoring the finer nuances which the Papiamentu words incorporate. He says: "...mundu oksidental (lesa Europa) a kuminsá pone man riba kurason di haiku pa sinti e vibrashon di slanan di e arte di mas karakterístiko di Hapon" [Western world (read Europe) began to place their hand upon the heart of haiku in order to feel the vibration of the beats of the most characteristic art of Japan]

(Kristóf, 1993, 15). As to how he was introduced to this form of art, Juliana explains that it was the book by J. van Tooren entitled *Haiku Een Jonge Maan*, which inspired him to begin composing (not translating) haiku in Papiamentu, using the rules and techniques of Japanese haiku.

The Antillean poet continues to explain that there are two different kinds of haiku: one serious and the other humorous. The serious haiku has an idealistic quality, is full of romantic imagery and is profound. Each verse stands on its own much like a minuscule painting (Kristóf, 1993, 15). The humoristic type of haiku is called *senryu* or *hokku*. The *hokku* was originally the opening hem stitch of a linked series of haiku poems, but is now synonymous with haiku and haikai. Juliana notes that a *senryu* tells a humorous story or sometimes a dramatic tale. He compares this style of haiku to a ballad. Ending the article, Juliana notes that he has discovered that 'nos lenga papiamentu ta mashá adekuá pa komponé haiku, debí kisas na su simplesa" [our Papiamentu language is very adequate for the composing of haiku, maybe owing to its simplicity] (Kristóf, 1993, 15).

At this point it would be beneficial to take a closer look at the man Elis Juliana, as it is ultimately his past experiences that have shaped his identity and from which perspective he is writing. The Dutch critic, Aart Broek in a recent communication wrote:

> Elis Juliana was born on August 8, 1927, in Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles. Since the early 1950s Juliana has contributed extensively to literary writings in the local creole Papiamentu, with over a dozen of collections of poetry and short stories to his name, including the four volume Organisashon Planifikashon Independensia (Organization Planning Independence) or OPI in short. He cultivated as no other the intrinsic rhythmic and tonal aspects of the language, while showing

himself greatly interested in the Afro-Caribbean life-styles of his people. He also contributed extensively to the furtherance of writing for children in the creole language. Besides, Juliana distinguished himself in the fields of the visual arts, with various international exhibitions, and of ethnography, specializing on local folklore and the oral tradition (Email communique from Aart Broek).

Mariëlle Capello wrote in the newspaper *Vigilante* (1994) about an interview with Elis Juliana in which he spoke frankly about his early upbringing, his aspirations to write, his hopes and his observations about life on the islands. Elis Juliana said that from his childhood he had loved to read and to observe. From the age of 14 or 15 he would write verses to his girlfriends. One author who was influential in his youth was the Colombian author Vargas Vila. Though there are friends and family members who remember that he loved to read, Juliana is quick to point out that he did not receive this love of reading from his mother. On the contrary, according to Juliana, his mother used to warn him not to read too much for fear he might turn crazy from all that reading. Commenting on his love for observing, Juliana recounts that it began in his youth. When he noticed things, he would want to know why they were the way they were and wanted to know all he could about them. For instance, he wanted to understand how parents raised their children, how they would guide them through life and how they would punish them for wrongdoings.

Many of his stories are the direct result of his past observations of the human race and nature around him. Allowing that he was one of them, he was yet able to see the human foibles of the Antillean and to recount them in his stories and poems. The poem *Flor di Datu* (Cactus Flower) was based on his youth, which he recorded in poetic form. To learn to observe helped him to be able to paint with words. His

education was from what he called 'e Universidat di kaya' [the University of the Street]. Juliana ended this interview saying:

> Un t'ami a inventá poesia. Loke m'a purba di hasi ta popularisá e arte di poesia; bini ku kosnan di mas simpel posible. Basta e tin ritmo aden bo to alkansá pueblo... Den pasado nan tabata konsiderá poesia kosnan di den nubia haltu ku ta hendenan intelektual so ta biba aja riba. Ta e simplesa ta e kos di mas importante p'ami.
> [I was not the one who invented poetry. What I tried to do was to make the art of poetry more popular; beginning with the most simple possible form. As long as it has rhythm is enough to make the people happy... In the past people considered poetry as something that was elevated to the realm where only the intellectual people dwelt. The simplicity of this thing [poetry] is of the utmost importance to me] (Vigilante, September 5, 1994].

As an example of Juliana's haiku, the article quotes [my translation]:

Para den kouchi	A bird in its cage
ta fluit pa gaña mondi	is whistling to make believe
ku e ta felis.	that it is happy.

Translating Juliana's haiku posed many problems. Since haiku is traditionally poetry that consists of seventeen syllables arranged in three unrhymed lines of respectively five, seven and five syllables, the translator is bound to adhere to the same configurations if the translation is to be that of the haiku format. There may be times when the concept in the target language may be similar, but not identical to that in the original language. Haiku #1 in his book proved to be a test.

> Un bon yobida
> ta mustra e buraku
> den dak ku ta lek.

The literal meaning of these lines is: A good shower shows (reveals or brings to light) the hole in the roof which is leaking. However, having to adhere to the haiku form forces one to reconsider the translation and after several attempts and rejections, I settled upon the following approximation:

A heavy downpour
does reveal the aperture
in the roof which leaks.

The next example notes that in Papiamentu the idea of crying is conveyed with the words 'water from the eye' (singular), whereas in English one would use 'water/tears from the eyes' (plural). Though it might seem to be a small point, this substituting of the plural for the singular, nevertheless it shows that the translator has to be aware of these subtle differences. Why for instance does Juliana use 'awa di wowo' and not 'lagrima'? The haiku in Papiamentu reads:

Awa di wowo
ta laba hopi mancha
for di kurason.

Although the translation could read: 'Water from the eyes washes many a blemish (spot, stain or blot) out of the heart', the haiku format commands another translation. Thus straying from the exact word for word translation, but choosing the sense for sense translation, the following rendition was selected:

Many a teardrop
washes away blemishes
from the aching heart.

At times, in translating Juliana's Papiamentu haiku into English, something seemed lost from the original. The haiku no longer seemed to flow and showed a

stilted style. This outcome was not the original author's fault, but rested completely with me as I agonized over how best to transmit the original meaning. When it was particularly difficult to gauge what the intentions of Juliana might have been in the composing of a specific haiku, I availed myself of the wisdom of friends and family. It was perhaps because of what Robinson describes as the "translator's professional pride and integrity" (Robinson, 1997, 29), that many hours were spent tracking down the sense and the meaning of a particularly difficult word.

The next stumbling block encountered was how to convey accurately Juliana's style. Surely his manner of writing arose out of what formed him, his past, his experiences, his family. It seems likely that Juliana, himself a strong advocate of the Afro-Caribbean / Afro-American identity of Papiamentu, would avail himself of the often forbidden or at least hidden-away aspects of past servitude and bondage which plagued the Caribbean. Jorge Labadie-Solano mentioned in a recent communique that each translator will have a different interpretation of Juliana's haiku and that perhaps Juliana would not agree to having different styles from his own representing his haiku. As an author himself, Labadie-Solano admitted that he would not be pleased to see his work represented by a different style than the one he intended in the first place. He explained with this example:

> A few years ago a former student of mine, an adult who had lived and worked in Aruba asked me to translate some of the poems that he had written in Dutch, because he intended to publish in Papiamentu his homage to Aruba. He had already asked a lady from Curaçao and also a gentleman to translate some of his other poems. I declined the honor on the grounds that his poems merited a consistency in style. He eventually asked someone else. The book of poems was published and the product proved my point. I was not elated at all by this, because I

believed and continue to do so, that his poems merited a better result (Email consultations with Labadie-Solano).

It is important to collaborate with the original author to understand what his intention was, his imagery and his purpose for writing his literature. It is only then that the translator will be able to approximate the initial intention and to do credit to the author in the translation of a particular piece of work. That this is not always possible can be noted from the following anecdote. During a recent interview with the author Juliana, several haiku were mentioned. When asked what exactly he meant with a particular haiku, Juliana replied:

> I can't remember what feeling I had when I wrote that particular poem or haiku. When the mood strikes, I have to take my pen and write down my feelings in the form of a poem right away, so as not to forget it, however that does not mean that I will be able to recall that same mood weeks, months or years from now. Neither will I remember what I tried to convey with those words (Juliana, interview, 2000).

Joyce Pereira mentioned in a recent interview the publication of a new book, *Isla di mi - Island of mine* (2000), which is a collection of poetry by Aruban poets. She said that it was Frank Williams, a well known author and poet, who translated all the Papiamentu poems into English and the two poems by Dax Hassell from English into Papiamentu. It seems he had some misgivings and these Pereira shared with me:

> Traduci poesia ta hopi kibramento di cabes. No tur imagen figurativo bo por traduci; no tur ora e traduccion tin e mesun impacto cu e original; hopi biaha e nificacion ta cambia por completo, ora bo traducie. Y asina bo ta haña bo cu tur sorto di problema pa soluciona...Traduci poesia ta exigi hopi di e traductor. Bo mester tin un conocemento grandi di e dos idiomanan...y mi no por imigina mi, cu bo

ta traduci poesia, si bo mes no ta poeta...Bo mester por sinti y compronde kico e poeta ta bisa den su poema y ta esey bo mester purba traspasa den e otro idioma...asina bo ta crea un poema nobo berdad den un otro idioma, pero ekivalente na esun original. Bo ta creativo artisticamente, pero na e mesun momento limita na e concepto original. E poeta original mester por reconoce su obra den e traduccion. [Translating poetry is very taxing to the brain. Not every figurative image can be translated; not always does the translation have the same impact as the original; many times the meaning is changed completely in translation. And thus you find yourself with many problems to solve ...Translating poetry demands a lot from the translator. You must have a great knowledge of both languages... and I cannot imagine that you are translating poetry, if you yourself are not a poet... You must be able to sense and to understand what the poet is saying in his poem and that is what you must try to force through into the other language... thus you are creating a truly new poem in the other language, however equivalent to the original one. You are artistically creative, yet at the same time limited to the original concept. The original poet must be able to recognize his work in the translation].

Juliana obviously has a love for language in general and specifically for his mother tongue, Papiamentu. Being an observer as well as an artist, he paints with words to relay a message. His specific expertise in handling and molding words can be seen in the haiku he creates, as with a minimum of words he is able to speak volumes. Going beyond mere verbal dexterity, and with just a few 'brush strokes' Juliana captures in words a moment's essence such as a severed wing lying in the street, an ant standing on top of a mushroom or an old grandmother walking through the streets with a basket balanced upon her head.

I did not view my translation as being in contest with Juliana's original text, neither did I attempt nor had it in mind for my translation to surpass the original. My aim was simply to expose to the world the linguistic and aesthetic energies bound up in this unassuming Papiamentu creole. It was because I had a strong bias leaning toward the original text that I retained some of the Papiamentu words in my translation for the sake of its foreignness. It was the power of Juliana's text which gripped me and became the creative impulse of my translation of *Un mushi di HAIKU* . Through my translation I invite the reader to eavesdrop on the Papiamentu culture.

Although Juliana's text was the original, it must be noted that no text can be completely original, because language itself, in its very essence, is already a translation; a translation from auditory or visual non-verbal stimuli and impressions to written ones. My translation of Juliana's text was a new creation and as such also constitutes as an original and unique text with the simple aim to introduce the reader to the culture and identity of Papiamentu speakers in general and to Elis Juliana specifically.

Chapter Four

An Examination of Juliana's Haiku

The approach employed in discovering how this collection of haiku was assembled will resemble that of the structuralist method, with an analysis which begins with deconstructing the text to later reorder it. The visual aspects of the haiku, with the 5 syllable, 7 syllable and 5 syllable format, have been noted earlier.

Un mushi di HAIKU consists of 46 pages of haiku and 7 pages of illustrations by Elis Juliana himself. The booklet of prose contains 184 original haiku written in Papiamentu. Of this number 5 are clearly marked as being Epitaphs, their theme obviously being Death. Other themes that appear in the haiku are Children, Folklore, Humanity (which includes human foibles such as hypocrisy, inferiority complex and greed), Life, Money, Nature, Human Relationships between Men and Women, Religion, and Women.

Under the theme of Religion it becomes apparent that Juliana comments not so much on religion itself, but on the hypocrisy and the disguise which surrounds it. Since the discovery of the islands, the Spanish worked on the conversion of the natives they found there, bringing with them Spanish priests and missionaries who were to convert and baptize the natives. This same mission was promoted later when the African slaves came to the islands. It was felt that the slaves were less than human and as such the Dutch did not want the slaves to convert to Protestantism as this would cause them to be 'brothers' in a common belief. Consequently the slaves became Roman Catholic. However, this same religion placed upon the slaves also constantly reminded them of the yoke forced upon them by their owners, which in

turn led to feelings of inferiority. Becoming Christians seemed to be the only alternative for the slaves. Underneath there was always the presence of earlier beliefs which included the forbidden religious practices of the past. These were still talked about, however now in euphemisms as a disguise and in secret meetings. Juliana addresses the hypocrisy surrounding conversion to Roman Catholicism and the 'going underground' of earlier African beliefs and folklore in haiku # 49:

# 49.	Kuater ta bela.	Four is the candle
	Sinku lo ta e waha.	and five will be the wagon.
	Seis ta kargadó.	Six the pall-bearers.

In haiku #49 Juliana refers to the old African religious belief that 4 candles placed in a certain format signify that a death has occurred. The number 5 is an indirect reference to the hearse, which has 5 wheels, 4 on the car and one spare, while the number 6 refers to the six friends and pallbearers who will carry their friend to his last resting place. The African taboo of mentioning death is respected and circumvented by referring to the outer signifiers of death.

# 133.	Mucha ta puntra	Children are asking
	kon hende por a saka	how people could have fashioned
	potrèt di Señor.	a likeness of God.

With haiku # 133 Juliana points to the honesty of children, who in their innocence ask questions grown-ups have, but will never voice. In a later explanation of this haiku Juliana noted that we find so many paintings and images of God, yet supposedly no one has ever seen God. He further noted that in the past, many of these images or paintings were in the likeness of the slave owners, thus portraying these people as God. Having experienced at the hands of these same God-like masters

rather harsh cruelties, how could the slaves truly believe in this type of religion? Juliana contended that for the most part, the slaves merely endured and accepted on the surface the religion forced upon them, for to do so was in fact to survive.

One of the greatest dangers to Papiamentu was the characteristic tendency of a colony to subordinate its own identity to that of the Mother country. Luckily, the leading poets of the A-B-C islands in this century have persistently supported the emancipation of Papiamentu by stubbornly continuing to publish in this language. It was not only these poets who preserved the Papiamentu heritage. Many a child of European heritage in the past was brought up by black nannies also called *yayas*, who spoke Papiamentu to their charges and told them stories of Kompa Nanzi (or Ananzi). Juliana refers to Nanzi and his sly manners in haiku # 155:

# 155.	Nanzi ta papia	Nanzi is speaking
	nèchi ku e muskita	politely to the fly
	promé ku e ku'é.	before capturing it.

Just as the tales of Nanzi are known on many Caribbean islands, so are the *tambú* dances. The *tambú* is a drum made of primitive materials, and on Curaçao they use a drum which is covered with a tightly-drawn sheepskin at one end. In early times the dance would only be accompanied by the tambú, but in the years that followed a *chapi* (the steel blade of a garden spade) was introduced as a second instrument from which high notes were extracted by tapping it with a small iron rod.

Many African tribes see the drum as an instrument with magical powers. The fascinating rhythmical sounds of the tambú add force to the prayers, ceremonies, rituals, lamentations and chants that accompanied it. Originally the tambú was used by the slaves deep in the night, far out of reach of their master's hearing, to pour out

their hearts in tragic tunes. There they would dance with arms hanging limply as their bodies swayed. This type of ritual was forbidden by the Church as well as by the law. For years the Roman Catholic priests tried to eliminate this 'devilish' dance from the islands. Nevertheless the people continued to practice this dance in their clandestine gatherings.

As living conditions changed, so too did the dance and the mournful character of the tambú. A new exiting rhythm was adopted, and the once opposed 'devilish' dance now acquired the status of a cultural heritage and is today even nurtured by the political authorities. Nowadays, a more refined and developed version of the originally African tambú exists and is called the *tumba.* This dance, once tolerated only late at night, has stealthily penetrated the layers of political and religious restrictions, to flourish openly as a prized tumba-festival during carnival times. Juliana refers to the above mentioned elements in # 5, 47, 49, 50, 73, 101, 109, 110, 117,126, 133, 138, 145, 155, 163, 183. Possibly one of the most striking examples of the legacy of 'pa tapa kara' (to cover the face/ to disguise) and by doing so diminishing or even negating its existence is found in haiku # 145, where Juliana speaks as one who is tired of pretending that these earlier connections to the African heritage did not exist. He is of the opinion that as the slaves were never asked if they wanted to become Christians, if they wanted to be baptized and if they wanted their songs and dances to be banned, the religion they accepted in order to survive was done out of hypocrisy, out of pretense. Thus he writes # 145 with which he explains that the slaves and their descendants were so fatigued of playing the game of hiding or covering their face. It was only by pretending that one could survive, only by being a hypocrite that one could continue living. They wished they could be forthright and honest, but the only

alternative they had to escape harsh treatment or even death was to accept what came their way, knowing full well the heavy weight this deception placed upon their souls. Thus he writes:

# 145. Kurason kansá	A heart very tired
di hunga kore kohé	of playing "Go catch the thief"
ku kara tapá.	with a covered face.

Juliana uses old sayings or proverbs which often are used by the older generation, to avoid confrontations, yet at the same time say what he wants to be known. Many of the origins of these proverbs go back to earlier African times. The function of a euphemism is to allude to a certain image, without actually saying the word itself. Thus while alluding to death, one can use: departing for his heavenly home, kick the bucket, crossed over the river, etc. Haiku # 148 and 150 are samples of euphemisms, which while never mentioning death (although they appear under the distinct heading of Epitaph), still paint an apt yet rather comical picture:

# 148. Fabor no basha	Please do not squander
awa di wowo riba mi.	your salty tears upon me.
Lagami seku!	Let me remain dry!
# 150. Aki ta mi kas.	This is now my house.
Esun di biba mi no	The former one I could not
por a paga mas.	afford anymore.

It was perhaps this symptom of hiding behind euphemisms, of disguise and camouflage which was the basis for Joceline Clemencia's book *OPI i e Gran Kamuflahe: Tokante poesia di Elis Juliana*.

Another theme discovered in Juliana's haiku is the role of Women. Juliana is

well aware that in today's world, the role of women is one of inequality to that of men. According to Juliana in haiku #163, even the prayer "Our Father" negates the role of women in this world. Although Juliana is the advocate and champion of women, in haiku # 34, 72, 97, 98, 143, he is not unaware of their faults, some of which he describes in # 6, 91, 96, 106. Probably the most descriptive haiku in favor of women is # 98:

# 98.	Ku su sonrisa muhé ta dobla asta kachu di toro.	It is with her smile that Woman can mold the horns of a bull.

Perhaps his hardest knock to men comes in haiku # 142, which shows the vulnerability of men and the power women hold over them:

# 142.	Forsa di hòmber ta kuminsá i kaba den skoch'i muhé.	The power of men begins and terminates in the lap of women.

Juliana's solidarity with women is noted in one of his other literary works *Dama di Anochi* (Juliana, 1959). With his haiku Juliana gives women an important role in society. He seems to say that it is she who is the one who gives birth and as mother guides and nurtures her children. Juliana celebrates these qualities of mothers, yet is just as apt to mention that overindulgence by mothers, will eventually lead to future troubles, one of which he mentions in haiku # 6:

# 6.	Mama ku duna su yuchi muchu suku lo kome salu.	The mother who gives her children loads of sweets will later taste tears.

Human frailties are also mentioned or alluded to in Juliana's haiku. Separate

topics such as greed, the tragedy of drunkenness, poverty, distrust, strife and laziness can all be labeled under the general heading Life. With just 17 syllables Juliana paints a picture of the luckless woman seated underneath her broken umbrella, selling tickets of luck, as can be seen in haiku # 119:

# 119.	Un machi sintá	A woman seated
	ku su parasòl kibrá	'neath a broken umbrella.
	ta bende suerte.	Seller of Good-luck!

The most poignant picture Juliana paints is when he speaks of nature. His love for nature clearly comes across as he looks at the skies, the stars, flowers, plants, birds, goats, cattle and ants. How moving his haiku which describes finding a severed wing on the street as seen in haiku # 39.

# 39.	Meimei di kaya	A piece of a wing
	pida ala di para	in the middle of the street
	ta yama ayó.	seems to spell farewell.

There are several haiku that deal with natural elements such as wind, rain, the sea, clouds and tropical skies. One sample from this category is found in # 105.

# 105.	Dos strea ta frei	Two stars are flirting,
	ku kinipí di wowo.	winking eyes at each other.
	Nochi tropikal.	A tropical night.

As I mentioned before, this translation is by no means finished. As more insight into the character and the identity of the poet is gained the earlier translation will continue to develop in an effort to nearest approximation of the original intent of the author.

Juliana's identity comes across in his poetry. He does not negate the past, the slavery, the hardships, the inequality, but incorporates it all in his poetry. He is also

a strong advocate for others to embrace the Papiamentu language, this same language which in the past was made fun of by those in power and at times was referred to as "the cawing of crows." In his book *Dede pikiña ku su bisiña*, Florimon van Putte writes that in the past Papiamentu was called "the old, poor slave language of the Negroes" (Putte, 1999, 14). Earlier sentiments were that not only did the Papiamentu language have a limited capacity for expressing ideas, but that those who used the language also possessed a diminished mental capacity, and as such stood on a lower rung of civilization, barely two degrees above that of the orang-outangs. In an effort to hinder non-Antilleans from learning to speak Papiamentu, it was advertised that speaking this creole would seriously jeopardize the eventual mental growth of its users (Putte, 1999, 44).

Times have changed however, and now there is a concentrated effort to use Papiamentu as instructional language in the schools. In interviews with Sidney Joubert in Curaçao and Joyce Pereira in Aruba, both hastened to explain that though they applaud the idea of having teachers use Papiamentu as language of instruction in the schools, they feel that this cannot be done before those same instructors have received extensive training in producing correct and grammatical Papiamentu. Just because you have spoken Papiamentu from your childhood doesn't mean that you know all the ins and outs of the language, or know even the methods, strategies and philosophies of teaching. Both Joubert and Pereira are actively involved in teaching Papiamentu to prospective teachers. Today the efforts of those tireless champions for the Papiamentu language are being publicly acknowledged. In the *Amigoe di Korsou* on April 29, 2000 I read about three people receiving the *Ridder in de Orde van Oranje-Nassau* (similar to being knighted) among which was Sidney Joubert, a

linguist and enthusiastic promoter of the Papiamentu language.

Sidney Joubert explained to me in an interview that decisions for new educational policies are based on Sociolinguistics factors, such as for example the linguistic relationship between Papiamentu and Dutch, the level of national consciousness and societal development that suggests that the islands' population is ready to define itself and to take on a separate identity. That the Antilleans are ready to express this separateness is apparent because for some time now Papiamentu has become the major medium for communication in newspapers, television and radio broadcasts. This development of Papiamentu playing an ever increasing role in all levels of social and political life in the A-B-C islands is of tremendous importance because it facilitates a socialization channel for its users and instructs the young with knowledge of its culture. This in turn realizes ethnic continuity.

Joyce Pereira mentioned in an interview that the colonial history has been an immense stumbling block to literary production in Papiamentu. The inferiority complex a people carries with them is not easily cast aside. Healing has begun. Through many years the specter of slavery has been woven through every Antillean folk song, dance step and artist's brushstroke. Legends of Tula, leader of the slave rebellion have been proudly handed down in an attempt to say "This is who we are". In an earlier interview Joubert explained that the new volume called *Pa saka kara* is an attempt by Papiamentu speakers to no longer hide because they are suffering from an inferiority complex, one that was a direct result of the colonial power's dominion, but to proudly proclaim who they are and to show their literary prowess.

An other way in which the Antilleans are dealing with the sad story of slavery can be seen for example in the bittersweet history of Landhuis Knip, a 300 year old

plantation site which was one of the first and largest strongholds established by the Dutch West India company in 1693. Unfortunately the prosperity of Landhuis Knip was born on the back of slavery. Many slave dwellings stood on this plantation, one of which was the home of the legendary black leader Tula, who rallied the slaves into a full scale rebellion in 1795. Today, this restored building stands as one of the best examples of authentic Dutch colonial architecture as well as a history lesson in what happened to the slaves. Rather than decry their past misfortunes, the Antilleans have seen fit to restore and open up Landhuis Knip as a museum, for a view into their past. The museum comes complete with antique furniture, old photos and even a special room devoted entirely to the tambú, an ancient African dance that was at one time forbidden both by the Dutch Government and the Catholic Church. The comeback of the tambú as part of the island's important folkloric traditions is but one way in which the Antilleans are expressing their identity and ethnic roots.

Yet another example of renewal of past identity can be found at the museum Kurá Hulanda. This museum, dedicated to the history of Black Suffering, carries an inscription by the Antillean poet Nydia Ecury upon its walls [English translation is mine]: "In the garden of your soul, try to weed out rage, so that you can plant peace. Do not let the woes of yesteryear enslave you anew."

The museum sits directly on the spot where once stood the major slave holding yard in Curaçao. The museum includes among others a reconstructed African village, a full-scale model of the hold of an African slave ship as well as historic documents such as were found on the infamous ship Amistad. Museum Kurá Hulanda stands as a testimony to the sacrifice of Curaçao's Black slaves. It is only by acknowledging the past, reflecting on past experiences, that healing can take place

and that this proud Papiamentu people can look forward with pride and hope, casting off the inferiority complex that has plagued them for centuries. And when we see brand-new publications appearing such as *Pa saka kara*, (from Curaçao) which contains the history of the Papiamentu literature and its accompanying 2 volume anthology, and *Isla Di Mi*, (from Aruba) an anthology of Aruban poetry, it becomes clear that the Papiamentu identity is alive and well.

It becomes apparent that Juliana believes that survival and application of the heritage language is the primary key to the survival of a particular lifestyle and ethnic continuity. As the content of a culture is contained in language, it becomes imperative to maintain that culture or else it will deteriorate and perhaps die out. At the same time it is obvious that no culture will retain its present form, but instead will be influenced by a variety of outside forces. Cultures change over time and the composition of a given culture will vary from that of a previous generation. Likewise, a living language will undergo change depending on the active lifestyle of a particular generation. Juliana's purpose seems to be to call his people to use their living language, which embodies all the past influences from a meeting of various ethnocultural situations and restrictions and yet is open to accept new loan words, and to enthusiastically celebrate their distinctive Papiamentu identity.

As stated earlier, the translation into English of Juliana's *Un mushi di HAIKU* is a work that will always be able to accept revision as new awareness is gained about various nuances hidden in the Papiamentu language. Juliana's poetry is not always transparent. Sometimes Juliana's language becomes non-transparent by taking the literal meaning of an idiom or figurative expression. Because of the nature of haiku, each word and punctuation needs to be carefully weighed. This of course presents the

translator with a considerable challenge. Puns for example almost never transfer across languages and although a related phrase may be used, the resulting translation often appears clumsy.

Having explored the identity of one Papiamentu author, using only his haiku, this thesis will serve as a stepping stone toward further studies in the fascinating world of Creole literatures. I would be remiss in not mentioning a further exploration contemplated for a Ph.D dissertation that is to center on the dynamics of the identity and expression of self of Papiamentu authors. Although many approaches to the study of literature emphasize the unique and different powers of literatures, I intend to emphasize that literary forms and uses of language are connected to the ways that we use language on ordinary occasions. The point of doing this is to show the passage from ordinary language to literature as it has been negotiated in the work of various Antillean authors. In such a work more Papiamentu authors and more literary genres would be examined in an effort to establish the effect of literary production in Papiamentu. To that effect, I have already begun to translate the poem *Mi Nigrita - Papiamentu* [My Black Darling, Papiamentu] by Guillermo Rosario in which he compares Papiamentu to the Black Antillean woman. This poem is a lengthy declaration of love and at the same time is an indictment to the various nations that formed the Antillean people.

Chapter Five

By Way of Conclusion: An Interview with Elis Juliana

Elis Juliana was gracious enough to grant me a series of interviews: the first one took place on April 25, 2000 and the second interview took place on April 27, 2000. In the back yard of his daughter Korra's house, stands a tiny hide-out, a kind of atelier where the poet retreats to spend most of his waking hours. Upon my arrival I was kept waiting for several minutes although Juliana had observed my arrival at the front of the house, and had in fact been standing outside his front door.

After the introductions I was invited in and as I took in the cramped surrounding, the character of the man stood out. Elis Juliana is a wiry man of 73 years with close-cropped white hair. Around the room there were many books, several recording machines in various sizes and an antiquated desk upon which stood an old fashioned manual typewriter Juliana uses every day. In the back through a half-opened door several articles of clothing could be seen hanging from nails. Juliana explained that he was a taciturn man and likened himself to a hermit crab, who likes to be by himself. Every morning he arrives from his home some distance away, promptly at seven o'clock and reviews, rewrites or composes poems or just thinks about life in general. Juliana still writes poetry. Weekly he publishes haiku in the *Amigoe di Korsou*, alternating one week in Papiamentu and the next week in Dutch. His recent musings about the fate of the Cuban boy rescued from the ocean resulted in two poems in Dutch which were published on April 11 and 14 respectively.

As I did not want to hold Juliana to one topic, the following might appear somewhat disjointed; however, Juliana seemed most comfortable when he was setting

the pace and when he was able to change the focus of the conversation. He was also more comfortable if the interviews were not taped. The following comes from notes made during five hours of interview, which spanned two days.

Juliana mentioned that he became interested in creating haiku after he had read several haiku in Dutch and in Spanish. Then, because he thought that Papiamentu had a great value and potential, he began composing haiku in that language. He mentioned that not all Curaçaons think the same way as he does about Papiamentu. Many don't believe that Papiamentu is a language in its own right and therefore they don't respect the language. He contended that in the old days people talked about Papiamentu as being a dialect, yet they had no idea what a dialect was. They believed Papiamentu to be merely a contact medium for African people, descendants of the slaves. Juliana mentioned that one of their own, Joseph Sigmond Corsen wanted to prove that Papiamentu was a language in its own right and therefore he wrote the poem *Atardi* (Afternoon). With this poem he wanted to show that Papiamentu was a language in which one can hate, laugh and love. Juliana went on to say that his own aim in having weekly television and radio programs for children was to create within them a pride for the Papiamentu language and to encourage them to explore their imagination. With his Ananzi stories he would encourage his listeners to let their imaginations run wild.

To Juliana the power of a word is of the utmost importance. His main idea with his writings was to teach his people the value of Papiamentu and to correct the misunderstood power of a single word. With the term 'my people' he meant those who descended from the slave population, a category where he placed himself. In the old days, said Juliana, the Blacks were not allowed to receive an education. So instead they educated their children with their singing as well as with their sport. There was

the 'stokken gevecht' (stick fight) between the inhabitants from Banda Ariba and those from Banda Abou. While stick fighting they would sing songs and used euphemisms to express their emotions, because they could not speak plainly for fear of retribution from the slave owners. Words had no value for the black man and where never used to express the real heart and soul. Hypocrisy and lying became an art and a method of survival. Those same people who preached about the love of God were also the ones who tortured and mistreated the slaves. Hence the slaves adopted the ways of the owners, became baptized and pretended to change religion in order to survive. To remain unbaptized for instance, was to remain inhuman, but to become baptized was to be accepted as a human being by the owner as well as by God. It was this inability to speak the truth which led to the Ananzi stories, said Juliana. Ananzi had to be a trickster in order to survive, he had to pretend, to lie and so did the slaves.

It is because he wanted to convey to his people that a word is powerful that Juliana began writing haiku. This form of poetry uses a minimum of words with which to paint a picture. With this art form of simply using 17 syllables, Juliana hoped to show his people that the word was powerful after all. On the spot, during the interview, he gave an example of the brevity of a haiku in English to illustrate his point. (This impromptu composition showed that Juliana was equally proficient in English as in Papiamentu.)

Every year anew
Tiger pledges to become
a vegetarian.

To prove his point about a word being powerful, Juliana told about the

expression 'yu di Korsou". He mentioned that 'yu' means child or dependent. If you call someone a 'yu di Korsou' you label that person as being and remaining a dependent, unable to care for himself, continually dependent upon the care giver. In the past, the slave owners gave their slaves this label so as to distinguish them from others. Juliana takes great umbrage at this label and refuses to call himself a 'yu di Korsou', calling himself 'un kurasoleño' instead. (In a later interview with Sidney Joubert, this distinction was made light of, as Joubert proudly calls himself a 'yu di Korsou' and is not plagued by any negative vibes). I told Juliana that I have always called myself a 'yu di Korsou' because I was born on the island and that I felt none of the distinction he pointed out to me. His response to me was that our situations were different and that I had not lived the stigmatized life he had.

Juliana mentioned further that something which has had great repercussion from the slave times until this very day, and has aided the feelings of inferiority the descendants of slaves carry with them to this day, is their last name. Slaves were given the last name of their owner, so that every one would know where each individual slave belonged. However, no owner, be they Portuguese, Spanish or Dutch wanted to be linked to their slaves in exactly the same way as would be their official and recognized offspring. Thus a method was used where if for instance the slave owner had the name Schotborg, he would bestow on all his slaves the name Borgschot. This way one could know to whom the slave belonged, yet the family name would not be 'sullied'. To this day there appear names on the islands such as Oduber and the slave name Dubero. Another way to distinguish slaves from owners was to prohibit the slaves to use the same spelling. Thus it was readily noticeable who was the owner (Hassell), and who was the slave (Hasel), or Pietersz (owner) versus

Pieters (slave). The differences in these names continues to this day and has the effect of maintaining the inferiority complex many Antilleans suffer, said Elis Juliana. The only way to minimize this distinction is to pay much money to have your name changed.

Juliana mentioned that Curaçao was the strangest island of the whole Caribbean area. Things that happened here did not happen on the other islands. The Protestants came here and refused to let their slaves become Protestant, because this would place slaves and slave owners in the same category. This was a political matter. The Blacks were allowed to become Roman Catholic and were forced to be baptized. As a good Roman Catholic, the slave had to go to confession. If you did not confess your sins, you were placing yourself on the same level as God, whom all know is without sin. This was heresy and for that you were punished. It must be noted though that the black man did not trust the priest, as he was often the same one who was also the friend of many a plantation owner. Thus if you did not confess any sins, for fear of being punished for those sins by the owner, you were punished for being a heretic. Yet if you confessed real sins, you were punished for them also, because the priests would tell your owner. Thus the slaves adopted a manner of confessing that only involved stealing sugar or salt, for which they were not punished very much. However, the effect of confessing stealing only minor things, was that in letters back to The Netherlands, the slave owners would write - "See these people are like children, they only sin by stealing sugar and salt. Even their language is like that of a child's."

Another point Juliana made was that with the opening up of Shell Oil, people from the other islands in the neighborhood came to work on Curaçao. Many of these

black people had been baptized as Protestant, because they were ruled by the English. Now when these people came to work in Curaçao and called themselves Protestant, this caused great mental clashes with those living on the island, who had always been denied being Protestant. The Curaçaons wondered how their fellow black people dared to call themselves Protestant, thus white. On Curaçao no Blacks were allowed to be called Protestant, neither was a black man allowed to be called a Jew. This caused great confusion. The Catholic church however, accepted both black and white people.

Next Juliana talked about his grandmother who worked as a maid in the household of a Dutch family. He proudly showed me a picture of this woman, who could not read or write, but whom he admired. The picture was faded and showed an old lady smoking a pipe. "This is the mother of my mother", he said proudly. He recounted that his grandmother, the maid, was made pregnant by her boss and that his mother was the product of this loveless encounter. His grandmother was so ashamed of the baby girl that she gave her to be raised by someone on the island. Juliana's admiration for women comes from his own mother. He mentioned that he was punished seven times a week by his mother, because she was afraid that he would amount to nothing. Though she had other children, Juliana said that she placed all her hopes on him, willing him to become something and to do something great. I noted that while talking about his mother, Juliana's stern face relaxed and I could feel the love and admiration this man had for his mother.

Juliana was not ashamed that he grew up poor and remarked: " I am very proud that I have known poverty. This helped me to learn the essential things in life." As a child he would go outside and study the ants. He would dream that he

could shrink and in his daydreams would enter an anthill and talk to the ants. The ants were his Disney World. At night he would lay down on the ground and stare up at the stars and let his imagination run wild, pretending that the stars were flirting with each other, winking eyes. This love of nature he wanted to reflect in his haiku in *Un mushi di HAIKU.*

At the end of my final interview with Juliana, he presented me with two recently composed poems about the little Cuban boy, Elian Gonzalez. These poems were written in Dutch, a language Juliana is fully capable of using. (Joubert had earlier mentioned to me that Elis Juliana is an individual who dares to write a text in Dutch, even though he is a champion for the Papiamentu language; that he is totally sure of himself and is not afraid to speak his mind).

In trying to find similarities between the first well known haiku poet, Matsuo Basho (1644) and Elis Juliana, what came to the foreground were striking analogies. Robert Aitken (1978) wrote that while Basho wore the robes of a Zen Buddhist monk, it was no more than a convention used by haiku poets of his period. He felt that it would be wrong to claim Basho as a Zen poet or one who actively pursued the teachings and philosophies of Zen Buddhism. His use of Zen terminology showed that he was familiar with the ways and philosophy of Zen. It would be more accurate to call Basho a nature poet. His motivation to write seemed to spring from his interest in historical, political and literary associations in the world around him. He wrote about the things he observed, such as footpaths, birds, emotions, folklore and experiences. He attempted to compress the meaning of the world into the simple patterns of his haiku, disclosing hidden hopes in small things and showing the interdependence of objects. During his life he maintained an austere, simple hermitage

and at times withdrew from society to live in a simple hut.

Juliana never confessed to being a follower of Asian philosophy. He had never even heard of Basho, nor had ever been exposed to Zen Buddhism teachings. Juliana mentioned that he reclused himself daily to think and to observe and to create his poetry. From his haiku one can readily see that Juliana was able to use the harmony and delicately conceived criteria of the foreign art form used so efficiently by Basho, to create Papiamentu haiku. Juliana used the special rhythms and stylistic means and images found in Papiamentu that would be recognizable and meaningful to the Antilleans.

My own perception of the man is that although he is a nationalist who loves the Papiamentu language, he also does not hate Dutch. He feels no obligation to stick to one language in expressing his feelings. He will continue to express in whichever language he chooses his critical commitment to his multi-racial native island in powerful rhythmical poetry, without "tapa su kara" (covering his eyes) to prevailing politics, economic differences between the rich and the poor, or the ethnic differences that exist on the island. He will continue to think and to write in the little atelier in his daughter's back yard, using the ancient manual typewriter. He will continue to try to educate his people about the power of a word and to try to bring them to a point where they also will be proud of their unique Antillean heritage, so that they too may reconstruct their Papiamentu identity.

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Appendix

A Translation of *Un mushi di HAIKU*

Introduction

Haiku is a very short [condensed] form of poetry with only three lines of respectively five, seven and five syllables. For example:

Awa di wowo	(5 syllables)
ta laba hopi mancha	(7 syllables)
for di kurason.	(5 syllables)

This limitation forces the poet to say many things with few words and to fashion a deep thought. Since the haiku depends upon the precision of each word, even the space between the words get meaning.

Haiku is of Japanese origin. From the thirteenth century [on] in the palaces of kings haiku was written to be recited at court but it was not until the seventeenth century that haiku found popularity within Japanese villages, to later turn into the poetry of the people. In Europe, haiku gained value and recognition during the seventies of this century, when literary research started to study this Japanese art form.

With the publication of *Un mushi di HAIKU* my first intent is for our readers to become acquainted with this Japanese literary style and to demonstrate also the value and vitality of our Papiamentu language. I do want to point out that these haiku are original and are not translations of Japanese haiku. Our Papiamentu language has its riches!

Elis Juliana

[trans. Hélène Garrett]

1 A heavy downpour
brings to light the aperture
in the roof which leaks.

2 The index finger
which selects which ant must die
suffers no conscience.

3 The ways of a child -
running towards its mother,
and fleeing from her.

4 A deceased mother
lives on continually in
the mind of her child.

5 In the early morn
the *chuchubi* bird declares
its praise to the Lord.

6 The mother who gives
her children loads of sweets
will surely taste tears.

7 Position a rose
in the crook of a date tree
and watch it take root.

8 The bird is aware
that survival depends on
well developed wings.

9 Idleness surely
is the causative agent
for going astray.

10 Too much rainfall will
give the indigent farmer
very little yield.

11 The pen turns silent,
while the pencil finds courage
to address the king.

12 Just sitting idly
is no doubt the hardest work
without dividend.

13 The wind writes its name
upon the waters, also
smooths out its ripples.

14 When you bite your tongue
though you may blame your teeth, it
is still your own fault.

15 Duties neglected
mimic the same condition
as constipation.

16 The *kolebra* runs [*kolebra* is a snake]
sure that the devil himself
is out to get it.

17 Looking to buy shoes
in order to walk on clouds
is surely futile.

18 Hard to hear someone's
growls of an empty stomach
when your own is full.

19 Monied people who
can cover all expenses
complain without cause.

20 The time to borrow
approaches on bended knee
but departs on wings.

21 It is a fact that one
is his own worst enemy.
Nod acknowledgment!

22 Too much liberty
incarcerates a person
in his own prison.

23 Continue to give
while never expecting thanks.
End up much richer.

24 When feeling hearty
you don't reflect on your health.
That's why there's sickness.

25 All birds are aware
of their own limitations.
Here people fall short.

26 The product of love
cannot be removed without
escaping notice.

27 Birds who sit hatching
on unproductive eggs, may
hatch full-blown problems.

28 Happy memories!
Grandma telling us stories
while grinding coffee.

29 It seems in my youth
that our daily bread did come
from heaven above.

30 The animal world
teaches us to understand
what people are like.

31 Why is the bouquet
sprinkled with tears on the grave
of our dear Mother?

32 Just a few droplets
and *beyisima* covers
the ground's nakedness.

[*beyisima* is a creeping vine]

33 Every fruit knows
that as soon as it ripens
it must leave the tree.

34 Important to know -
Not just a gorgeous body
defines a woman.

35 The child is asking
his mother why it is that
grandmother is old.

36 Aiding the ascent
of someone's reach for the top?
Watch out for debris!

37 The withering leaf
releases its hold and falls.
Mission accomplished!

38 Each family tends
to create within its fold
its own maverick.

39 A piece of a wing
in the middle of the street
seems to spell farewell.

40 A handle-less pick
bides its time with great patience
within the toolshed.

41 The greatest advice
aimed at those wishing to fish:
You must use fish bait.

42 Today a *chòler* [*chòler* is a popular name for a drug addict]
laughed such a miserable laugh
which troubled me greatly.

43 John Doe seems to think,
nails hold people together.
Go look at his house!

44 A photographer
already knows that he'll hear:
"I don't look my best."

45 September seas and
September winds have begun
to punish the land.

46 Life is tightly bound
to the boat which has been called:
Perhaps tomorrow.

47 A parrot always
can defend himself saying:
"Someone else said it".

48 Ethereal Life.
It is that wretched money
which encumbers Life.

49 Four is the candle
and five will be the wagon.
Six are the carriers.

50 A blown-out candle
spews forth a lot of smoke as
if to say 'Goodbye'.

51 Two elders in jest
congratulate each other.
More birthdays to come.

52 What a lovely sight
when two *totolika* birds
are fighting for fun.

53 If money were not,
then there would be neither
the rich nor the poor.

54 In a time of drought
the tiniest cloud will draw
attention surely.

55 Every bird knows
that the nest must be ready
before eggs are laid.

56 It's a known fact that
people covet money, yet
money is heedless.

57 Only rich people
can say that money cannot
buy all that's desired.

58 Grandmother argues -
defending her grandchild and
condemning the judge.

59 Money helps shatter
friendship and confidence and
crumbles them to bits.

60 The palace's all done.
Come decorate the hall with
the receipts of debt.

61 Very natural.
Life knows that it is alive;
death doesn't know it.

62 Not every rose
in the queen's garden puts forth
a wonderful smell.

63 The cat's head managed
to obtain passage. The rat's
fate has now been sealed.

64 The heavens are clear.
Goats go into their corral.
Rainfall expected.

65 A child is crying.
He's opened his umbrella,
but the rain won't fall.

66 Those who dream that they
have already passed away,
Live in perfect peace.

67 With her nakedness
Woman is the cause that Men
tend to loose their head.

68 My silhouette
has begun to disappear.
I'm nearing my end!

69 A young kid's bleating
asks from out in the distance
where his mother is.

70 Domestic donkeys
or from the open fields, both
carry their own cross.

71 The dogs of the world
from either home or palace,
are all still called Dogs.

72 A mother stands with
her child carried on her hip
close by the seashore.

73 Grandmother carries
while tottering, yesterday's
basket on her head.

74 Amid the garden
a sole red rose stands burning,
and dying of thirst.

75 Above, from a branch
a drop of blood is falling.
Poor bird in distress!

76 It is not the word
of damnation that curses.
It is the speaker.

77 Maybe it is good
that you do not receive that
which you so desire.

78 The bats of the night
have devoured the buds from
the garden's flowers.

79 The cloud has moved on.
The farmers stand once again
leaning on their hoes.

80 All *barika hel*
have their black suits all ready.
They might be needed.

[*barika hel* is a bird species]

81 Within a belief
there hides a sentiment of
'insecurity'.

82 To ask a worm for
the secret of its being,
is to spoil its mood.

83 The ant never has
time even to think about
having vacations.

84 The alcoholic
will kiss even the very
steps of an outlet.

85 The slacker knows well
how to get someone to do
his own dirty work.

86 Try asking the night
where the sun is hiding and
he'll feign ignorance.

87 The sickly, rich man
is much more destitute than
the healthy poor man.

88 Lips of a woman -
as fragile, yet as strong as
a spider's cobweb.

89 Docile sheep who lift
their head and look ahead, may
turn into tigers.

90 A gift always costs
the giver something more than
merely dollar bills.

91 A prostitute does
offer her body without
involvement of heart.

92 Children cry sometimes
without fully knowing why.
Just human nature.

93 The cries of a child
are not because of sadness.
But for 'whatever'.

94 Many a teardrop
washes away blemishes
from the aching heart.

95 Fishermen believe
that women have the same mood
as a northern sea.

96 Women can cry at
whatever time or moment
that's opportune.

97 A woman's eyes are
the spark with which to ignite
each and every heart.

98 It is with her smile
that Woman can mold even
the horns of a bull.

99 A little child sleeps
in the folds of my arms, what
a feeling of peace.

100 Although I made up
my face to mimic a clown's
my eyes betray me.

101 To be sanctified
is the prerogative of
God the Creator.

102 The bird in the cage
sings until the day that it
can get its freedom.

103 Within every house
a strongbox is used to store
treasures and keepsakes.

104 Amid every field
there are flowers and thorns that
grow in harmony.

105 Two stars are flirting,
winking eyes at each other.
A tropical night.

106 *Dama djanochi* -
emits its lovely odor
and dies at daybreak.

[*Dama djanochi* is a flowering plant that opens up its leaves only at night]

107 The guests are now gone.
The owners of the home may
move freely again.

108 In my little house
I have no need to look for
ways to find myself.

109 What yesterday was
a mortal sin appears as
quite normal today.

110 The world is changing.
Shedding layers of time from
a person's disguise.

111 To the bird of prey
either fresh or putrid meat -
all are sustenance.

112 What a somber sight
a branch of *beyisima*
dried up near the fence.

113 Hunger is able
to transform even angels
into fierce dragons.

114 The *totolika* [*totolika* is a bird species]
knows to fake being crippled
thus saving its young.

115 The only way to
remain young forever is
to take a picture.

116 A *totolika*
is fixing himself up to
go look for a mate.

117 Nodding their heads - an
old couple dreams of playing
hopscotch and past games.

118 A holy moment.
The opening and refolding
of butterfly wings.

119 A woman seated
'neath a broken umbrella.
Seller of good luck.

120 A blood-red rose has
opened up within my chest.
Ah, awakening love!

121 The bat is hanging
under the balcony of
genuine distrust.

122 Ambitious ant stands
on top of the mushroom's cap.
Alas! Misplaced pride!

123 A cloud hanging 'round
the summit of the mountain.
Insecurity!

124 The wind is sleeping.
Stagnant water in the tank.
Take care of your health!

125 The final shot for
the road was also to be
the very last drink.

126 Upon every leaf
the hand of God has written
the date of demise.

127 Trust a match only
when it no longer retains
its sulphurous head.

128 The thief who can no
longer steal, will still always
try to steal your trust.

129 A banana bird
will play fight for hours on end
with his mirrored self.

130 Sheep in flagrantly
uncultivated pastures
sometimes become fierce.

131 The day that the clock
of the heart strikes thirteen, means
that it's cash-in time.

132 Death does not realize
how preoccupied life is
with its cessation.

133 Children are asking
how people could have fashioned
a likeness of God.

134 It is a known fact
that only in death, life seems
to merit value.

135 It is not until
old age that we understand
the snares of money.

136 A profound proverb:
We borrow from life and pay
back later with death.

137 News travels quickly
whenever it reeks of some
evil misdoings.

138 The guilty always
attempt to hide behind their
faulty memory.

139 The ass knows it well.
The cross upon its back is
not that of the horse.

140 Just before dying,
everyone will see his past
life flash before him.

141 Place a diamond
into a pot of gold and
then try cooking it.

142 The power of men
begins and terminates in
the lap of women.

143 Uncomplicated.
Women give birth to women
and give birth to men.

144 With just one finger
I terminated an ant.
What heroism!

145 A heart very tired
of playing "Go catch the thief"
with a covered face.

146 The man in the mirror
who is imitating me
must be demented.

147 Two banana birds
are constructing their nest.
Planned parenthood!

148 **Epitaph**
Please do not squander
your salty tears upon me.
Let me remain dry.

149 **Epitaph**
Nothing left to say.
And me thinking that I'm
irreplaceable.

150 **Epitaph**
This now is my house.
The former one I could not
afford anymore.

151 **Epitaph**
If you could only
know how much you disturb my
final peaceful sleep.

152 **Epitaph**
I was the one who
stopped drinking alcohol and
smoking and breathing.

153 Every writer signs
his very last epitaph
with the word - Amen.

154 The well of kind words
used to comfort the saddened,
will sometimes dry up.

155 *Nanzi* is speaking
politely to the fly
before capturing it.

156 For sure at our home
things are much cheaper than at
whichever hotel.

157 A little old house
or a luxurious castle,
your home is your home!

158 The captain may die,
but the drifting ship of life
will keep sailing on.

159 One more drink in case
I meet an evil spirit
on my way homeward.

160 Bull, go do your job!
What are you doing alone
inside the corral?

161 Why should I play the
role of a fish, when I do
not even have gills?

162 Beset with worries
to set things aright. I am
so preoccupied!

163 In the name of the
Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
No place for Mother!

164 Man has been known to
embellish a story to
enhance its effect.

165 The dog awaits with
almost saintly patience upon
its boss's goodwill.

166 Even a donkey
will count to ten before it
flies off the handle.

167 A kiss signifies:
I would like to consume you.
Cannibalistic.

168 *Gueli* is screeching
letting people know that the
rainy times are here.

[*Gueli* is a kind of screeching insect]

169 Behold the scorpion
with its stinger at the ready.
Ever distrustful!

170 Ringing ears.
It's my deceased mother who
calls me to order.

171 Ever remorseful,
the drunkard grudgingly discards
the empty bottle.

172 The swollen stomach
of the woman in childbirth.
The globe of the world.

173 One fine day the sun
will reveal all the gossip
of the horizon.

174 Life passes through the
mortal grindstone and becomes
wholly pulverized.

175 Dragonfly kisses
the forehead of the pond with
the tip of his tail.

176 Very difficult -
teaching a donkey to crow.
One can always try.

177 Sadness over there.
Here a carnival of joy.
The world keeps turning.

178 Miscalculated
head butt is the reason that
the goat lost its horns.

179 I do love women.
Women are the source of birth.
Thus, women come first.

180 Whatever befalls
be it good or terrible,
life simply goes on.

181 In the school of life
there is no student who doesn't
want a vacation.

182 The world laughs along
with the north pole, but also
weeps with the south pole.

183 The usher can judge
the beatitudes better
than the minister.

184 It's at the point of
bearing the cross of life that
the back starts to bend.